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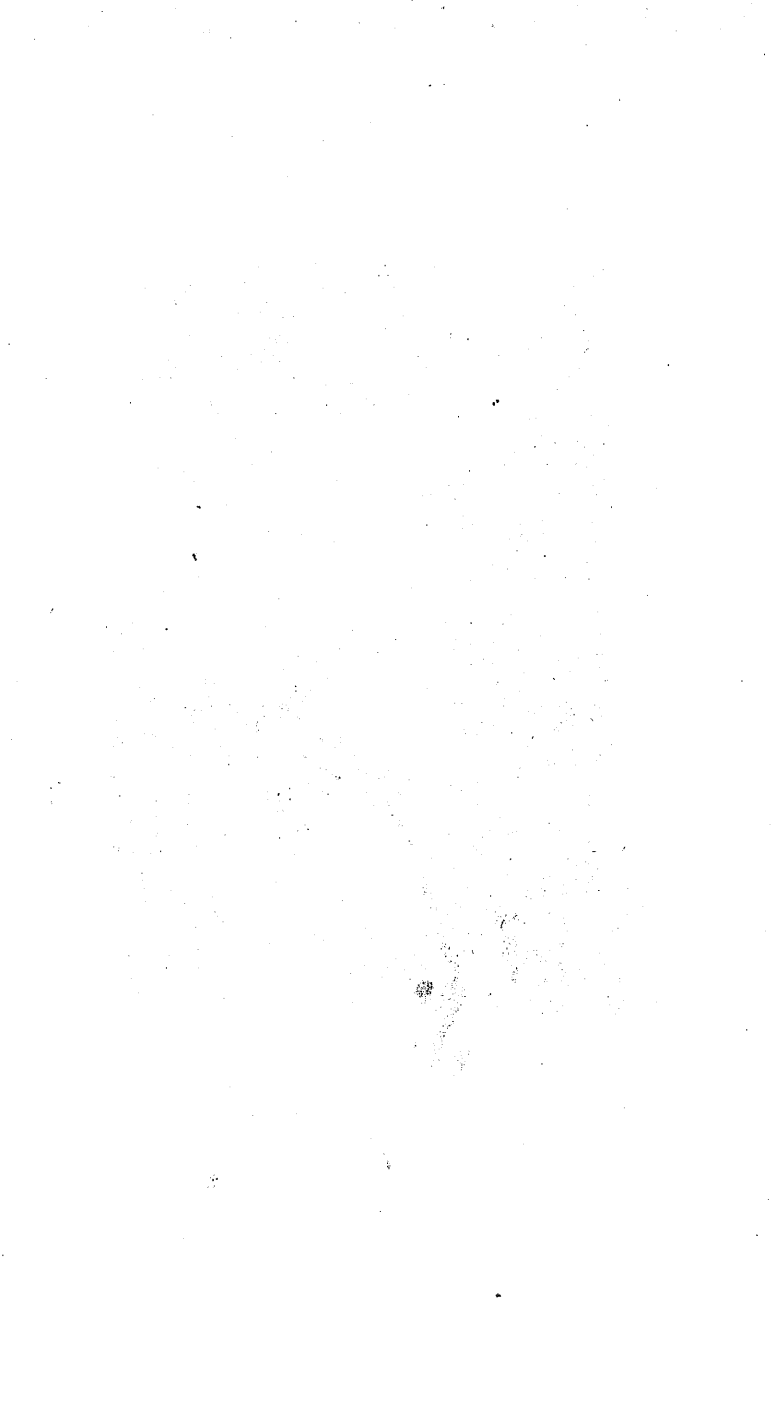






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Dan Baker



D.

REVIVAL SERMONS.

First Series.

BY THE

REV. DANIEL BAKER, D.D.

PRESIDENT OF AUSTIN COLLEGE, TEXAS, FORMERLY PASTOR OF THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH, WASHINGTON CITY.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

FOURTH EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.

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PUBLISHER'S ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE THIRD EDITION.

THE first edition of this volume was issued in the year 1846, and was received with so much favour that a second edition was called for within the same year. It has been out of print for some time, and the author, in compliance with the repeated demands for it, has prepared it again for publication, with additional matter.

Dr. Baker has been a preacher of the Gospel for nearly forty years; his labours have been eminently blessed of God, in the conversion of many souls, especially in his missionary tours

in the Southern and South-western States. He has just completed a tour through the States of North and South Carolina, and part of Georgia, during which time he has attended twenty-four protracted meetings, of one week's continuance each, in which he preached every sermon except three, without one day's rest. As the result of those meetings, about six hundred persons were hopefully converted, and connected themselves with the various churches in which the services were held.

The favour with which the Second Series, recently issued, has been received, encourages the publisher in hoping that the present enlarged edition of the First Series will prove equally acceptable.

PREFACE.

THE First Series of REVIVAL SERMONS having found so much favour with the Christian public as to demand a *third* edition, and the author having heard of a number of persons to whom the *reading* of the work has been blessed in their hopeful conversion, would return thanks to Almighty God for this broad seal of Divine approbation put upon the truth herein exhibited; and, at the same time, would offer his fervent prayer to God that many others may be benefitted, in like manner, long after the author shall have been numbered with the dead.

If it be asked why these discourses have been called *Revival Sermons*, the author would simply state, not only that they were designed

to be of an *awakening* character, but were preached (in substance) in numerous revivals, and were blessed to the hopeful conversion of many precious souls, of whom some fifty or more have become ministers of the gospel.

REVIVAL SERMONS.

First Series.

SERMON I.

TRUTH AND EXCELLENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

DEUT. xxxii. 31.

THESE words form a part of what is usually denominated "the Song of Moses." It is a poem of singular beauty; and, by the best judges, is supposed to contain a specimen of almost every species of excellence in composition. It opens with a sublime invocation of the heavens and the earth; evidently designed to convey a strong idea of the peculiar importance of the subject matter of the poem. The sacred writer speaks sublimely of Israel's God: "Ascribe ye greatness unto our God," says he. "He is the Rock; his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." The author of the poem then

adverts to some instances of God's providential care exercised over the tribes of Israel, particularly in conducting them, as on the wings of an eagle, towards the promised land. "As an eagle," says he, "stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." This idea of the tribes of Israel being conducted out of Egypt, towards the promised land, as upon the wings of an eagle, is one of great sublimity, particularly, taken in connexion with these words—"I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand; for I lift my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever." In comparison with such a God, the idol gods of the heathen were, emphatically, "vanity and a lie." No wonder, then, that Moses here indulges in the feelings of joy and triumph; no wonder that he uses the exulting language of our text; "Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." Mark the expression—*Even our enemies themselves being judges*. Moses adverts, it seems, to some well known instances, in which the superiority of Israel's God was acknowledged, even by those who served other gods, which indeed were no gods. This acknowledgment, it will be recollected, was made by the magicians of

Egypt, when, utterly unable to resist the miracles wrought by Moses, the servant of the true God, they exclaimed, "This is the finger of God!"—that is, this miracle comes from the true God. This acknowledgment was also made by the horsemen of Pharaoh, when, terror-stricken in the Red Sea, they cried out one to another, saying, "Let us flee from the face of Israel, for their God fighteth for them against the Egyptians." It was, it seems, in reference to these, and similar cases, that Moses used the exulting language of our text: "Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."

And now, my brethren, permit me to apply the passage before us to a class of persons not entirely dissimilar. I mean to those ranged under the banner of infidelity. Rejecting the sacred volume, they have a system of their own, if system it may be called. Now, in reference to them, and their system, I feel very free to apply the language of our text: "Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." It may be thought by some present, that the speaker is not happy in the selection of his subject this day, as there is, perhaps, not an avowed infidel in this assembly. But, suppose there be not an avowed infidel present, there may be many spiced with infidelity; and amongst them, perhaps, some interesting young men, who, in their

reading, and travels, have had infidel cavils and objections brought before their minds which they know not how to meet; the result is, they have become sceptical. This they are not exactly willing to confess, lest, perchance, it might reach a mother's ear, and pain a mother's heart!—but, the seeds of infidelity are there; and, so long as they exist in the bosom, they operate as serious barriers in the way of the soul's salvation. This being the case, it is proper that, occasionally, at least, the evidences of our holy religion should be laid before every congregation. Those ranged under the banners of infidelity may plume themselves upon their wisdom, and the great superiority of their discoveries, but, thank God, we, who are Christians, occupy better ground than they do; and may well say, with Moses, in the joy and triumph of our hearts—"their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."

The supreme excellence, and great superiority of the Christian religion will appear, I think, very clearly, in the three following particulars:

- I. In the matter of evidence.
- II. In reference to the moral influence; and
- III. In relation to the happiness of man.

I. In the matter of evidence. Yes, my brethren, whatever witlings and infidels may say

to the contrary, it is a stubborn fact, that this blessed volume, called the Bible, comes to us with credentials clear!

“————— on every line
Marked with the seal of high divinity;
On every leaf bedewed with drops
Of love divine, and, with the eternal heraldry
And signature of God Almighty stamped
From first to last.”

Yet the infidel rejects the sacred volume! And why? O, because he is a very reasonable man, and cannot, forsooth, without a prostration of everything like reason, embrace a system so preposterous and absurd! Now let sound reasonings and facts be submitted to this enlightened and candid assembly.

1. If there be no divine revelation, as infidels are wont to affirm, herein is a marvellous thing, that there should be none! And why? For many reasons. One is this: There are certain questions propounded by human nature itself, weighty and important questions, and which, in the very nature of the case, never can be answered without a divine revelation. For example: Where is God, my Maker? The author of my being, who is he? and what is he? It will be recollected that this question was asked by Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, to Simonides, one of the seven wise men of Greece. The philosopher requested one day to think upon the subject:

at the expiration of that period he demanded two days, and then four—doubling the time. When asked, why he demanded so much time? he replied, “Sire, the longer I think upon this subject, the more I am lost in its difficulty and immensity.” In the very nature of the case, it is none but God that can reveal God; and yet, the infidel scouts the idea of the Scriptures having been divinely inspired—and he, a reasonable man! But another question propounded by human nature, is this: How can a man be just with God? How can a man, who is a sinner, obtain the forgiveness of his sins, and be restored to the favour of his Maker? This, my brethren, believe me, has for ages and ages been one of the most confounding and perplexing questions ever presented to the mind of man. Heathen sages, and some of the wise ones of the earth at the present day, talk about penances and pilgrimages, bloody sacrifices, costly offerings, repentance and reformation, and many such like things. But it is all conjecture; and, in a matter of such immense importance, I want something better than conjecture. I am a sinner. I feel it, and, troubled on account of my sins, I ask, with trepidation—How can a man be just with God? How can I, a poor, burdened sinner, obtain the forgiveness of my sin, and be restored to the favour of my God? I listen, and there is no response! There can be none, save

from the throne of God!—and, without it, I live in darkness; I die in gloom, and, sinking in the cold embrace of death, I have only to say, with the dying Adrian, “Alas! my trembling, dear, departing soul, whither art thou going?” I say, there can be no response, to satisfy the troubled conscience, save from the throne of God. The case is clear. Take this illustration. I have injured you: upon reflection, I am very sorry for it, and I wish to know on what terms I may be restored to your favour. Shall I ask one of your servants? He knows nothing at all about the matter. He can give nothing better than conjecture. You, my dear sir, the person injured, you only can tell me on what terms I may be restored to your favour. Even so, in the very nature of the case, it is none but God, himself, who can satisfactorily answer the question, How can a man be just with God?—And yet the infidel laughs at the idea of a divine revelation, and plumes himself upon being a reasonable man! Not so very reasonable after all! Mark my word—not so very reasonable after all! But,

2. If the Bible be not divinely inspired, herein is another marvellous thing to be accounted for—that some how or other this blessed volume answers all the purposes of a divine revelation. To say nothing of its giving an account, and the only rational account, of the

creation of the world, of the origin of sin, of the division of time into weeks of seven days, of the deluge, and other matters connected with the early history of the globe, is it not remarkable, that the Bible answers most clearly and satisfactorily the questions propounded, as we have stated, by human nature itself? Take the first question, Where is God, my Maker? or, what is God? You recollect the reply of Simonides to the monarch who propounded to him the question, "Sire, the more I think upon this subject, the more I am lost in its difficulty and immensity." Now, ask the disciple whom Jesus loved the same question—John, What is God? "God is love," says he. How beautiful! how sublime! But if you wish a more extended view of the Divine character, according to the Scriptures, "God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth." Can any description of the Supreme Being be nobler and more perfect than this? And, being drawn from the Bible, is not this "a stamp divine"? Are not these "credentials clear"? And yet the infidel rejects the sacred volume—and, doubtless, he is a very reasonable man! In intellect, a son of Anak—head and shoulders taller than all around him! "O shame! where is thy blush?"

But another question, as we have said, which human nature asks with well grounded solici-

tude, is this—How can a man be just with God? How can a man, who is a sinner, obtain the forgiveness of his sins, and be restored to the favour of his Maker? Sages of ancient times, and wise ones of the present day, will talk, as we have said, about the merit of penances and pilgrimages, and lay great stress upon the efficacy of repentance and reformation; but these things have no divine warrant; they are at best, only matters of conjecture, and all the evidence of analogy is against them. Here is a man who, by a course of licentious indulgences and extravagance, has lost his health and property; and I find that neither penances, nor pilgrimages, nor repentance, nor reformation, nor all of them united, will remove the effects of his licentiousness and extravagance; how do I know, then, that they can remove the penal consequences of sin? In the very nature of the case, none but God can tell on what terms he will pardon the sinner, and receive him to favour; for none but he can tell what the honour of the Divine government may require, or how the punishment of the offender can be remitted, without endangering the tranquillity of other worlds, and creatures which he has made. Now, on the subject of forgiveness, and restoration to the favour of God, the Bible is remarkably clear, and full, and express. Thus Paul, addressing the men of Antioch, says, “Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren,

that through this man, Christ Jesus, is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him, all that believe, are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Again, writing to Timothy, he says, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." And again; writing to the Romans, we find him using this language: "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have received the atonement." And again: "There is, therefore, now, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." And all this beautifully harmonizing with the words of the Lord Jesus Christ himself—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." How delightful are these declarations! What light do they give to the inquiring sinner—what sweet relief to the burdened soul!

3. If the Bible be not divinely inspired, here is another marvellous thing—that it furnishes a perfect code of moral precepts. In this, it is perfectly unique, and stands alone in its glory; for I am bold to say, that there is no other volume upon the face of the earth which furnishes such a code of precepts. Those acquainted

with the writings of heathen sages and moralists, know full well, that their ideas on the subject of moral obligation, are remarkably crude; some sanctioning suicide, and some infanticide; and, even the enlightened and comparatively virtuous Cicero, says, "It is lawful to fight for glory." And what is this, but sanctioning ambition? Ambition! the direct tendency of which is to drench the earth in blood, and fill the world with widows and orphans! The Bible, thank God, teaches a purer and better morality than this! We said that it furnishes a perfect code of moral precepts. We do not declaim, we give proof, absolute demonstration. Our Saviour sums up all the precepts of the sacred volume in two great commandments. *First*, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and soul, and mind, and strength; and *Secondly*, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Now, these two commandments embrace every duty that can be required of man. Take the *first*. We are to love the Lord our God supremely; see how this embraces every duty which we owe to our Maker. For example, am I required to submit to God? How easy, and how natural it is to submit to one whom we supremely love! Am I required to repent of my sins? It is love which breaks the heart; which melts it down in tender relentings for sin! Am I required to choose God as the portion of my

soul? If I love him supremely, I have done it already. Am I required to obey all his commandments? And who does not know that,

“’Tis love which makes our cheerful feet,
In swift obedience move.”

Take the *second* great commandment—Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Only let this precept be acted upon, in all the length and breadth of its requirement, and, verily, there would be no occasion for bolts, nor bars, nor jails, nor penitentiaries, nor anything of the kind. “Love,” says the apostle, “worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” Yes, only let the great law of love be acted upon, in all the length and breadth of its requirements, and man would become an angel, and earth a paradise! To crown the whole, strange as it may seem, all duties both toward God and man, are, in the Bible, embraced in a single word; and that, how simple, how well understood, by the learned and the unlearned; by the civilized, by the barbarian; by male and female; by the child of three years of age, and the man of threescore and ten—Love! For *love*, says the apostle, is the fulfilling of the law. Is not this a stamp divine? Are not these credentials clear? Yet, the infidel rejects the Bible! Let him write a better book, if he can! And this reminds me of the case of Lord Lyttleton, who, belonging

to a club of infidels, was pitched upon to burn the Bible. Taking the volume in his hand, he approached the hearth, but upon second thought, returned and replaced the book upon the stand. When asked, why he did not throw it into the fire? he made this very sensible remark: "We will not burn this book until we can get a better." Verily, "their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." Again:

4. If the Bible be not divinely inspired, is it not very strange and unaccountable that so many miracles were wrought in illustration of its truths? Miracles wrought in open day; in the presence of enemies; and subjected to the severest scrutiny. Now, either these miracles were wrought, or they were not: if wrought, the case is settled; for they are the clearest credentials of the divine mission of those who wrought them. If not wrought, how comes it to pass, that we have such a particular and detailed account of them? How comes it to pass, that they were attested by so many eye-witnesses, many of whom suffered martyrdom in attestation of the facts which they affirmed? Moreover, how comes it to pass that these miracles had so powerful an influence in the spreading of doctrines so directly opposed to long established systems and the passions of men? And, let it not be forgotten, that, in commemoration of some of these miracles, we

have monuments and memorials brought down even to the present time: the Sabbath, for example, changed from the seventh to the first day of the week, to commemorate the resurrection of Christ from the dead. As the annual celebration of our national independence is a memorial and proof of the fact which it commemorates, even so the present observance of the Christian Sabbath is a standing monument of that stupendous miracle, the resurrection of Christ, which it commemorates. And yet the infidel wants proof! Once more:

5. If the blessed volume before me be not divinely inspired, how shall we account for the fact that it contains some five or six hundred prophecies which have been most literally and remarkably fulfilled; and which, I presume, no one who has a regard for his reputation, as a scholar, will dare to deny. Here, a wide field is presented to our view; we have not time to expose it very extensively, let me present only a few prophecies, as a specimen of the rest. Some three thousand years ago, it was predicted that the Jews should be a peculiar people. Have they not been a peculiar people for many ages past? Are they not a peculiar people at the present time? It was predicted that they should be scattered over the face of the earth. And where is the kingdom, under heaven, where some of this peculiar people are not found? It was predicted that they should

be oppressed and peeled; and those who are acquainted with their history, know that this prediction also has been most remarkably fulfilled. It was predicted that they should dwell alone and not be reckoned among the nations; and are they not at this very day, although scattered over the face of the whole earth, yet really a distinct people, isolated and alone? "The children of Israel," says the prophet Hosea, "shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim." Hos. iii. 4. And is not this their precise condition at the present moment? And have they not already continued thus to abide, lo! these many days? By estimation there are, at this time, about eight millions of Jews upon the earth; a sufficient number to form a powerful empire, or more glorious republic; and yet they have no king, no prince, no polity, no government of their own; and this has been the case for eighteen hundred years! How astonishing are these prophecies, and how exact their fulfilment! And how certainly true are the words of the apostle Peter: "Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Of Ishmael it was predicted, that he should become a great nation; that he should be a wild man, and that his hand should be against every

man, and every man's hand against him; and that he should dwell in the presence of all his brethren; (Gen. xvi. 12;) that is, should never be subdued, or brought into subjection. Those acquainted with the Arabs, know that these predictions have been fulfilled to the very letter; and with regard to the independence which they should ever maintain, it is remarkable, that, although special efforts have been made by powerful monarchs in various ages, to put them down, these efforts have all, ultimately, proved unsuccessful. Sesostris, Cyrus, Pompey, Trajan, and many other great conquerors, aimed at subjugating them, but never succeeded. At the present day, the Arabs, although wandering and predatory, are still an independent people; like the wild ass, whose home is the wilderness, whose pasture is the mountains, and who searcheth after every green thing. The prophecies in relation to Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, and Egypt, have also received their most exact accomplishment—their present condition, according to the statements of modern travellers, being precisely what was predicted so many thousand years ago. With regard to Egypt, I will mention a fact which may have escaped the notice of some: Egypt, says the prophet Ezekiel (xxix. 15,) shall never exalt itself any more over the nations. This was a bold prophecy, when we consider when it was uttered; but the subse-

quent history of Egypt has been in exact accordance with the prediction. But the particular point to which I refer is this: Some three or four years since, Mehemet Ali, the Pacha of Egypt, was upon the very point of subverting the Turkish empire; and would have done it, had not the sovereigns of Russia, Prussia, Austria, and great Britain interposed. And this they did, mark! not to accomplish the prophecy, but to preserve the balance of power. The prophecies which relate to the *Messiah* are about two hundred in number, which have in every particular been exactly fulfilled, in our blessed Redeemer. Let me mention only a very few.* It was predicted of him that he should be despised and rejected by his own people, the Jews; that he should lift up a standard to the Gentiles; to him should the gathering of the Gentiles be: and in him shall the Gentiles trust. Now this is prophecy. What is history? In exact accordance with the prophecy. Was Christ to be despised and rejected by his own people, the Jews? He came unto his own, says John, and his own received him not. And they, that is, the Jews, says Luke, were instant with loud voices in the temple, requiring that he might be crucified. Was Christ to lift up a standard to the Gentiles? and was not Saul of Tarsus, con-

* Isaiah liii. 3; xlix. 22. Gen. xlix. 10; xi. 10. Mat. xii. 21.

verted, and made the great apostle of the Gentiles? Moreover, to him was the gathering of the Gentiles to be. And who are they now who profess the Christian faith? Are they not Gentiles? Few Jews, but many Gentiles. On the morning of the Christian Sabbath, the doors of ten thousand sanctuaries are thrown open, and see the multitudes who gather around the standard of the cross! Are they Jews?—are they not Gentiles? But it is added: In him shall the Gentiles trust. We are all Gentiles, I suppose, who are here to-day; and now tell me, my brother, my sister—O ye precious sons and daughters of Zion! tell me, in whom do you trust for salvation? Is it not in the crucified Nazarene? And in whom did that dear mother of yours trust in a dying hour, when she so sweetly smiled, and said to you, “Meet me in heaven”—in whom did she trust? Was it not in Him who by the Jews was despised and rejected? I too am a Gentile, and I am not ashamed to say, that this same blessed Saviour is my only hope. Give me Christ or else I die! This day, then, have we evidence before our own eyes, and in our own hearts, that the prophecies are true, and the Bible is true. Yet the infidel rejects the sacred volume! And why? O, because he is a reasonable man, and he cannot, without a prostration of every thing like reason, embrace a system so preposterous and absurd! Ah! if I mistake not,

when afflictions shall make him more sober, and the near prospect of death shall make him more thoughtful, he will then see the evidence of the truth of the Bible more clearly than he does now! Like Ethan Allen, who, being asked by a dying daughter whether she should believe what her pious mother had taught her, or he? replied with tears, "My daughter, you had better believe what your mother has taught you." O how plain it is, and how appropriate is our text: "Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."

II. The supreme excellence or decided superiority of the Christian religion appears also in reference to its moral influence. And here, if I mistake not, we have public sentiment fully on our side: let a thoroughgoing infidel be truly converted and become a real Christian; will not all persons expect to see an improvement in his moral character? But, on the other hand, let a real Christian (if it were possible) become a thoroughgoing infidel, and is there a man upon the face of the earth who anticipates an improvement in his moral character? Would there not rather be a suspicion waked up in the bosoms of all, that that man has become loose in his morals, and, therefore, has become loose in his sentiments? Even the infidel himself is frequently constrained to pay homage to the Christian system, in relation to its moral influence. For example—here is an infidel about to

die; he makes his will, and, greatly desiring that his children should not be defrauded, he wishes to fix upon some honest man to act as executor; would he not rather select a man that he believes to be a real and consistent Christian, than an open and avowed infidel? Now these things speak volumes. The fact is, the general sentiment is this, that however imperfect some professors of religion may be, yet Christianity itself is most excellent; that it elevates the standard of morals, and has a direct and powerful tendency to purify the heart and improve the character of all who are really and truly brought under its moral influence; and hence it is expected to make better husbands and better wives, better parents and better children, better masters and better servants; yea, better altogether. This is the general sentiment; and I will now show that this general sentiment is well based. This we would argue from the character of its precepts, and the power of its motives. *First*, from the character of its precepts. It is evident, the more perfect the precepts the more happy their influence upon moral character. We have shown that the precepts of the Bible bear the stamp of absolute perfection; of course, then, so far as good precepts can influence the character of man, the influence of the precepts of the sacred volume must be most happy. But to place this in, perhaps, a stronger point of light, observe, there are three principles

of action—fear, interest, and love. Fear, as a principle of action, is certainly very powerful; but it operates only whilst the rod is extended. Interest is also a very powerful principle, but this principle is not strong enough to meet many cases; for a man may know what is right, yet do what is wrong; he may know that a certain course of conduct will promote his highest interests, but the principle of interest fails to rule him, not being strong enough. But there is one principle yet remaining, *love*; and that we may understand its true nature and power, see that tender mother—she has a beloved Joseph, or some dear little Benjamin, who is very, very sick. See the mother of that child! I can tell you where you can find her, by night and by day;—not in the store, nor in her neighbour's house, nor even in the sanctuary; no! but by the couch of her suffering child! This mother is a lady, born in affluence, and delicately brought up; and yet, only see, how-kind and unremitting she is in her attentions to her suffering child! She is a lady, I say, born in affluence, and tenderly brought up, and yet she even takes a positive pleasure in performing the most menial offices for her poor little darling. Now what is it that binds this mother to the couch of her suffering child? What is it that makes her so kind and unremitting in her attentions? Is it fear? There is no rod over her. Is it interest? The idea of interest never once enters her mind.

What is it then? Why it is love! Yes, it is love which binds her to the couch of her suffering child. It is love which makes her take a positive pleasure in performing the most menial offices for the poor little sufferer. Take away that mother (it will require a strong arm to do this!)—reach out the arm of a Hercules, and tear away that mother—substitute a hireling. Bring rewards and punishments to bear upon that hireling to their greatest possible extent, and I will venture to affirm, that there is no hireling on earth that will take a mother's place. And why? For this simple reason—the mother is under the influence of the strongest feeling which can animate the human bosom—love. Verily there is no principle of action like it, so strong, so uniform, so lasting! and, moreover, who does not know that the service which love prompts, is of all others the most pleasant and desirable? Now is it not remarkable that, in our religion, this is made the great principle of moral action. Yes, not fear, nor interest, but love. Love, says the apostle, is the fulfilling of the law. And to make the matter yet more remarkable, this principle being fixed upon, to wake it up and give it new power and energy over the human soul, God himself has set us an example of love in giving his Son, his only begotten and well-beloved Son, to die for our redemption. And now, candid man, speak! Does not this look like a religion which comes from God? If any reli-

gion can have a happy influence upon moral character, must it not be that religion, all the precepts of which are summed up in *love*? Yet the infidel wants proof!!

With regard to the motives which are, in the Bible, brought to bear upon the moral character of man, they are absolutely the strongest which can exist. This is no rhetorical figure, no idle declamation; it is simple, undeniable fact. Here is the demonstration. Are the motives to virtuous living drawn in the Scriptures, from God? They are; and now, is there any god in the universe greater than the God whom the Bible reveals? Are they drawn from the joys of heaven? They are; and are there any joys greater than the joys of heaven? Are they drawn from the torments of the damned in hell? They are; and are there any torments more tormenting than the torments of the damned in hell? Are they drawn from the love of Christ? They are; and is there any love so strong, so touching, so soul-subduing, as the love of Christ, who, according to the Scriptures, died on the cross for us? Are the motives drawn from eternity? They are; and is there any duration longer than that of eternity? Thus you perceive that the motives to holy living, in the Bible, are not only drawn from three worlds, heaven, earth, and hell, in short, from all quarters, but they are literally and absolutely the strongest which, in the very nature of the case, can be brought to bear upon

the moral character of man. The fact is, Christianity goes in advance, lays the hand of a master upon every source of motive, and monopolizes them all. And now, suppose infidelity would urge motives to holy living, (which, however, is not very probable,) whence will it derive its motives? From God? The infidel is not very certain that there is a God. Will infidelity draw its motives from the joys of heaven? These, he suspects, are only the dreams of the visionary enthusiast. Shall motives be drawn from the torments of hell? The infidel is quite sure that there is no such place as that. Shall motives be drawn from love? Alas! infidelity presents, in its system, no dying Saviour, no cross crimsoned with atoning blood! Shall the motives then be drawn from eternity? The infidel strongly suspects that death is an eternal sleep. O, what a poor thing infidelity is, when seen in the undress of its true character! How lean! how haggard! how shrivelled! aye, and may I not add, how frightful, too! I have mentioned, that if Christianity should universally prevail, if its precepts were acted upon in all the length and breadth of their requirements, there would be no occasion for bolts, nor bars, nor jails, nor penitentiaries, nor anything of the kind, for man would become as an angel, and earth as a paradise. But if, on the other hand, infidelity should prevail, does any man in his senses believe that there would be no occasion for bolts, nor bars,

nor jails, nor penitentiaries, nor anything of the kind?—that man would become as an angel, or earth as a paradise? I think not. In the providence of God infidelity did once prevail—*where?* In revolutionary France—*when?* During that period so properly called “the reign of terror.” Yes, infidelity did then prevail, for at that time the National Convention decreed that there was no God. The Sabbath was abolished; churches were turned into temples of reason; death was declared to be an eternal sleep; and the Bible was dragged along the streets of Lyons in a way of derision and contempt. Yes, I repeat it, infidelity then prevailed, and verily its fruits were the fruits of Sodom, and its clusters the clusters of Gomorrah. Infidelity then reigned, and most frightful was its reign. Its crown was terror, its throne, the guillotine; its sceptre, the battle-axe; its palace-yard, a field of blood; and its royal robes dripped, and dripped, and dripped with human gore. All France was, as it were, one vast slaughter-house, and the rulers of France, as demons from the bottomless pit. “O, my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united.” “Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.” But,

III. The supreme excellence, and decided superiority of the Christian religion appears in reference to the happiness of man. What has a favourable influence upon human character,

must also have a favourable influence upon human happiness, for these things are linked together like the balloon and its car: the ascent of the one, necessarily leads to the elevation of the other. That the Christian religion is favourable to human happiness, is, I believe, the secret conviction, even of many who may not openly confess it; hence it is no uncommon thing to hear even the openly wicked say, "I believe that the real Christian is the happiest man in the world:" and I recollect the remark of a certain sceptic, made to myself, (it was in the hour of affliction,) "O sir, you Christians have the advantage of '*us*!'" I think I may venture then to affirm, that general sentiment is on our side; and I think I can show that this general sentiment is well based, for what does the Christian religion do? It subdues the boisterous passions of the soul; converts the lion into a lamb; the vulture into a dove: must not this be favourable to human happiness? What does the Christian religion do? It gives exercise to gracious affections. Instead of encouraging anger, wrath, malice, revenge, and other hateful and soul-tormenting passions, it disposes its subject to be kind, gentle, affectionate, and forgiving; and must not this be favourable to human happiness? What does the Christian religion do? It sheds abroad a Saviour's love in the heart; gives the sweet assurance that our sins are all forgiven

for Jesus' sake; that the eternal God is our Father; that heaven is our home; and that, if the earthly house of this our tabernacle were dissolved, we should have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal and on high. O, it is a blessed thing to be a Christian; even "if it be a delusion," as one remarks, "it is a sweet delusion," and, "if false, no truth so precious as the lie." O see the young convert, whose evidences are bright and clear; how happy! and see the dying Christian, who leaves the world in the full hope of glory, how triumphant! The Pentecostal converts, we are told, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God. And when many believed in Samaria, we also learn, that there was great joy in that city. And the beauty of the thing is this, that when afflictions come, and comforts are most needed, then the consolations of religion are strongest and most abundant; for religion teaches every child of God, that afflictions are all ordered in mercy; and are but the sterner voice of God's parental love. Yes! and in the darkest hour,

"Here speaks the Comforter, in God's name, saying,
Earth has no sorrows that Heaven cannot cure."

This, my brethren, is certainly a great thing for man in this vale of tears; in this land of trials, troubles, disappointments, sickness, sorrow, and death. Ah! how many sad scenes of

mourning are presented in this sorrowful world of ours! Here some venerated father cries out, with the patriarch of old, My Joseph is no more! and my grey hairs must go down with sorrow to the grave! There, some tender mother weeps over the darling of her bosom, as she commits its clay cold form to its narrow house. Here, some affectionate husband laments the untimely death of the wife of his bosom, the jewel of his heart; and there, some devoted wife mingles bitter tears with the clods which rest upon the bosom of the dear man she loved—her husband. How distressing! But perhaps this is not all; she is made the widowed mother of poor fatherless children, who look up to her for comfort and support, and look in vain. The prop, the only support of the family, is taken away! and they, what shall they do? The heart, bursting with grief, vents its complaints, it murmurs and repines, “Where is the compassion of my God? where are the tender mercies of my heavenly Father? my affliction is too much for my wounded spirit! it is more than I can bear! would God I had never been born! or would God I were with my beloved, sleeping with him in his silent grave!” Cease, mourner! cease thy complaints! says our religion—It is God, why weepest thou? Remember he is a God of unerring wisdom, and boundless compassion. Know this—enough for thee to know—God

does not willingly afflict the children of men, but chastens and rebukes, in covenant love. Cease, mourner! cease thy complaints! thy heavenly Father speaks to thee: "Silence my child! what I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." O how does this sooth the smitten heart, and wipe away the falling tears! Verily, the consolations of religion are sweet and strong, fulfilling the words of the Psalmist: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble."

"How do you find yourself this morning?" said a certain pastor to a beloved female member of his church, who was near her end. Grasping the hand of her pastor, she replied, "I am in great pain, but O! I am happy! very happy!" How different was it with Hume's mother, who, when in deep affliction, said to her son, "My son, you have taken away my religion, and now tell me something to comfort me:" but no comfort could he give, and none could she receive. "God of Queen Clotilda," cried out the infidel Clovis I. of France, when in trouble on the field of battle, "God of Queen Clotilda! grant me the victory!" Why did he not call upon his own God? Saunderson, who was a great admirer of Sir Isaac Newton's talents, and who made light of his religion in health, was, nevertheless, heard to say in dismal accents on a dying bed, "God of Sir

Isaac Newton, have mercy on me!" Why this changing of gods in a dying hour? And it is a remarkable fact, if an infidel have a wife who is a Christian, he is very willing, in case of her death, to have the minister attending her funeral to say, "My friends, here we have a daughter of Zion shrouded and prepared for the burying. You all knew her very well. She was a Christian; she lived the life of the Christian; she died the Christian's death, and is gone to the Christian's rest, the pilgrim's home." But, suppose this wife of his had been as thorough going an infidel as himself, and the minister, at her funeral, should say, "My friends, here is one before us, shrouded and prepared for the burying. You all knew her well. She was a thorough going infidel. She lived the life of an infidel, died his death, and is gone to his place!" Would this please him? Nay, verily, for there are certain seasons when the mind will be sober, and the voice of truth will be heard! You have heard, no doubt, of many an infidel on a dying bed, wishing that he was a good Christian, but did you ever hear of a single Christian on a dying bed wishing that he was a good infidel? No! never! never! never! The case is clear. "Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." Well, my brethren, we must all die. We all wish to die happy—certainly, at least, on the safe side.

Now let it be remembered, that whilst the bed of death is most generally a terrible place for the infidel, "the chamber where the Christian meets his fate is privileged beyond the common walks of virtuous life, quite on the verge of heaven." Here, we will suppose, is a dormitory on the right, where Christians are breathing their last. Here, on the left, is another dormitory, in which infidels are giving up the ghost. Let us visit, first, the dormitory upon the right. Who is that who is just expiring? It is the very pious Halyburton. How serene! how calm! But, he is going to speak. Hark! let us catch some of his last words. "It is no easy thing to be a Christian," says he, "but, by the grace of God, I have got the victory! Now, I know, I feel, I believe! I rejoice! I feed on manna! I have angel's food! Mine eyes shall see my Redeemer! O the glory! the unspeakable glory! My heart is full! my heart is full!"

"————— Sure the last end
Of the good man, is peace! How calm his exit!
Night dews fall not more gently to the ground;
Nor weary, worn out winds expire so soft!"

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" Now, let us pass over to the dormitory on the left. Who is that just expiring? It is the wretched Altamont; (a fictitious name, but descriptive of a real case.) O how distorted are his features! and

how full of agony does he seem to be! The clock strikes, and he exclaims, "O time! time! it is fit that thou shouldst thus strike thy murderer to the heart! How art thou fled for ever! A month! a day! I ask not for years, though an age were too little to fit me for the work which I have to do!" Another groan, and he cries out in anguish unutterable: "My principles have poisoned my friend! my extravagance has beggared my boy! my unkindness has murdered my wife! And is there another hell? O thou blasphemed, yet indulgent Lord God! hell itself is a refuge if it hide me from thy frown!" Here we have even on earth, the first notes of the wailings of the damned in the world to come! Tell me not of the peaceful death of David Hume. His nurse has told some tales of horror—but let that pass. How did he die, as the most favourable account represents? He died playing at cards, and jesting about Charon and his boat! Does it become the dignity of man, or the solemnity of the hour of dissolution, in any case, to leave the world in this way? Believe me, it was only a desperate effort to bar serious thought!—like the school-boy, passing through the grave-yard at night, with satchel in his hand,

"Whistling aloud to bear his courage up."

Thank God, the Christian has no occasion for any artificial excitement of this kind, for, to

him, "to die is gain." Do you demand further proof? Let us make another visit to the dormitory on the right. How pleasant is everything around this hallowed spot! Who is that just sinking in the arms of death? It is Edward Payson. O how happy he looks! But he is going to speak; what is his language? "I am going to Mount Zion," says he, "I am going to the city of the living God! the heavenly Jerusalem! to an innumerable company of angels! to the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven. I swim in a river of pleasure! I swim in a flood of glory!" And who is that in the next chamber, who is bidding his friends a final adieu? It is William C. Walton, the associate of my college days; and what are his dying words? They are very beautiful and very sweet. "The sting of death is gone," says he, "the grave is disrobed of its terrors! Peace like a river flows into my soul! I am now in the Jordan of death, and, blessed be God, its waters do not cover me! I shall see Jesus!—See JESUS! what a thought that is! O glorious Saviour!" Surely, my brethren, the curtains of light and glory are hung around this dormitory; but around the dormitory on the left, the curtains of gloom and despair! Over this waves the white banner of the Prince of Peace! Over that the black banner of Apollyon! Here, are choirs of angels waiting to

sing the pilgrim to his rest. There, ministers of vengeance, ready to hurry the guilty soul of the dying sinner, reluctantly, O how reluctantly, before thy throne, thrice holy God! And now, my dear friends, one and all, remember, we must die: we cannot help it; and remember, after death comes the judgment! and once lost, lost for ever! When Death's leaden sceptre is laid upon our cold bosoms, no mistakes can be rectified any more; for, so soon as the breath leaves the body, the decree of an immutable God rolls over the shrouded form: "He that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." In which dormitory would you rather die? Immortal man! take care! great interests are at stake—see to it, that you be upon the safe side; for, I repeat it, *once lost, you are lost for ever!*

SERMON II.

THE GREATNESS OF GOD.

O Lord, my God, thou art very great.—PSALM civ. 1.

ONE reason why many persons habitually and fearlessly indulge in sin, is, that they know not God. "Thou thoughtest," says he, "that I was altogether such an one as thyself." Psalm l. 21. This being the case, it is immensely important that we seek to know God—that we seek to have some proper conceptions of his true character and dignity—of his exceeding greatness and majesty. But here the words of Zophar are brought to our recollection: "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is high as heaven, what canst thou do? It is deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth; it is broader than the sea." Job xi. 7, 8, 9. We admit it; we know full well that it is beyond a mortal's mind, beyond an angel's power, "to cast a thought half-way to God." Yet it is right and proper to push our inquiries here, for what though we cannot

“rise to the height of this great argument,” nor grasp the boundless theme, the effort may at least serve to expand the mind, and give us views of our Maker’s grandeur which we never had before.

The man who stands upon the shore of some vast ocean, and casts his eyes over the immeasurable deep before him, sees, it is true, no bounds; yet the contemplation of this sublime and magnificent scene greatly elevates his mind, and gives him conceptions of the immensity of the ocean, both new and grand. Who can grasp the amplitude of creation? who can cast his thoughts over all the works of God? who can measure the great temple of universal nature, and tell its height and its depth, its length and its breadth? Not a human being upon the face of the earth; yet, certainly, he who has studied the subject has more enlarged and correct ideas of it, than he who has not. Even so, what though after all our researches we cannot “find out the Almighty unto perfection,” the effort may, in some measure, elevate and expand the mind, and enable us with feelings of more profound veneration and awe, to utter the language of our text: “O Lord, my God, thou art very great.” The greatness of God appears in several things:

I. In comparison with the kings of the earth: and to this the Psalmist has special re-

ference in the words connected with our text. The kings of the earth are sometimes termed great; thus we read of Alexander the Great, of Constantine the Great, and Frederick the Great, but, verily, in comparison with the God of heaven, their greatness dwindles into insignificance—dwindles into nothing! Have they thrones? Their thrones are upon the earth; God's throne is in the heavens, "high above all height." Have they robes? God's robes are robes of light and majesty. Have they pavilions? He stretcheth forth the heavens as his pavilion, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. Have they chariots? He maketh the clouds his chariot—he walketh upon the wings of the wind. Have they kingdoms? The whole universe is God's kingdom, and literally he ruleth over all. And whereas the mightiest potentates of the earth are mortal, and must die, God is in his own nature immortal, and never dies, but lifts his hand to heaven and says, I live for ever! Comparing, then, the God of heaven with the monarch of the earth, as the Psalmist has done, we may say with great emphasis, "O Lord, my God, thou art very great." The greatness of God also appears,

II. In certain passages of Scripture which speak sublimely of him. Thus, Habakkuk, the prophet, says, "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran, Selah.

His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood and measured the earth: he beheld and drove asunder the nations; the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting!" Hab. iii. 3-6. "In my distress," says the Psalmist, "I called upon the Lord, and he heard my voice out of his temple. Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth. He bowed the heavens also, and came down, and darkness was under his feet: and he rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place, his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hailstones and coals of fire. Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings and discomfited them. Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils." Psalm xviii. 6-15. And what an idea of the exceeding greatness of God does Isaiah give, when speaking of him he says: "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand; and meted out heaven with the

span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." Isaiah xl. 12, 15, 16, 17. Once more: What a sublime idea of the greatness of God does the apostle John give in these words: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the heaven and the earth fled away, and there was no place found for them: and I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." Rev. xx. 11, 12. Here you will observe we have described the appearing of the great God, as final Judge, and as an effect of his appearance, the vanishing away of the heavens and the earth. As the sun, rising in full splendour, with its effulgent beams, scatters the shades of night and the mists of the morning, even so, at the coming of the great God as final Judge, the heavens and the earth, substantial as they are, shall be only as the shades of the night, and the mists of the morning. Smitten by the living and insufferable effulgence of his glory, the heavens and the earth shall pass away as

the shades of night and the mists of the morning, and no place be found for them! "O Lord, my God, thou art very great!" But the greatness of God appears,

III. In certain attributes ascribed to him in the sacred volume. For example. (1.) He is uncreated and eternal. What a thought this is—uncreated and eternal! without beginning of days or end of years! There is something absolutely overwhelming in this idea, but it is clearly presented by Moses in the ninetieth Psalm. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God!" And we may well say, in the language of the pious poet,

"Great God! how infinite art thou!
What worthless worms are we!
Let the whole race of creatures bow
And pay their praise to thee:
Thy throne eternal ages stood,
Ere seas or stars were made,
Thou art the ever living God
Were all the nations dead.
Eternity with all its years
Stands present in thy view,
To thee there's nothing old appears,
Great God! there's nothing new."

O! who can measure the past eternity of God? As all the nations of the earth, when compared with God, are as a drop of a bucket,

as the small dust of the balance, and even as less than nothing, and vanity, even so all the moments of time from the creation of the world down to the present period, when compared with the life of God, are as a drop of a bucket, as the small dust of the balance, as less than nothing, and vanity! Aye, and this would be equally true, if each of these moments should stand for a million of years. O Lord my God, thou art very great! (2.) God is omniscient. The wisest men on earth, and even the loftiest angels in heaven, know, comparatively, only a few things; but God literally knows all things; all things in heaven, earth, and hell; all things past, present, and to come! and mark, not merely great things, but small things. Literally, everything; hence the language of the Psalmist, There is not a word in my tongue, but lo! O Lord, thou knowest it altogether! No wonder he adds, Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is high, I cannot attain unto it.

“O wondrous knowledge, deep and high!
Where can a creature hide?
Within thy circling arms I lie,
Beset on every side.”

But this leads me to mention another stupendous attribute nearly allied:—(3.) God is omnipresent. This David teaches in the following very beautiful and striking language: “Whith-

er shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thine hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Ps. cxxxix. As the sun in its full brightness shines upon an extended plain, and every blade of grass, so to speak, is in the presence of that sun, so is every object, great and small, throughout the whole universe, in the presence, the immediate presence of God. I hold in my hand a crystal globe. It is surrounded by light; it swims in light; and light pervades every part. This is another illustration (imperfect indeed) of the omnipresence of God. But the best representation of the matter is this: according to the Scriptures, *the eye of God is everywhere*: The ear of God is in every place; and his hand upon everything. *First*, The eye of God is everywhere. All things, says the apostle, are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Yes, my brethren, there is not an angel in heaven, there is not a devil in hell, there is not a man on the earth, aye, and there is not a beast roaming in the forest, nor a bird flying in the air, nor a fish sporting in the deep, nor a worm crawling upon the ground, nor an atom floating in the breeze, which may not say with

Hagar in the wilderness—"Thou God, seest me!" Walls, shades, and distance, oftentimes hide objects from the view of man, but there are no walls so thick, no shades so dark, nor no distance so great which can hide anything from his view. Literally, all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. O Lord my God, thou art very great! But not only is the eye of God every where, but his ear also is in every place. As God sees everything which exists, so likewise does he hear every voice which is uttered, whether, if I may so speak, it be loud or soft, distant or near. Many voices being uttered at the same time will distract our attention. We usually attend to only one voice, at one and the same time, and even that is not heard when swallowed up by a voice which is louder still; for

"Who can hear a shaking leaf,
When rattling thunders round us roar?"

But God can, at the same moment of time, hear every voice, as we have said, whether it be loud or soft, whether it be distant or near; aye, and every voice distinct, whether it be the howling of the storm, or the sighing of the breeze; the rattling of the hail, or the falling of the dew; the crushing of the thunderbolt, or the music of the spheres; the shoutings of the world above, or the wailings of the world be-

neath. Yes, and if all tempests were howling, and all thunders roaring; if all angels were shouting, and all devils were wailing; and if, in addition to this, millions of worlds were dashing together in wild uproar, yet would it be to God as if the pulse of nature stood still, and God were listening to my voice alone. What an astonishing proof is this of the fact that God is everywhere, not only seeing everything that exists, but also hearing. But this is not all. The hand of God is upon everything. If your hand is laid upon me, assuredly I am in your presence; but the hand of God, according to the Scriptures, is upon everything, therefore everything is in the immediate presence of God, hence the language of the Psalmist, already repeated: "If I should take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Man is confined to a small spot of this earth which he inhabits, and this earth itself, in comparison with the universe, is but as an atom or a point; but God pervades all immensity! What an overwhelming thought this! God, by his essential presence, pervading the whole universe! Well may we exclaim, with the astonished Psalmist, "O Lord, my God, thou art very great!" (4.) God is omnipotent, but in speaking on this subject we may say, as Job said: "The thunder of his power who can

understand?" One thing we know, "He can create, and he destroy;" yea, he can dash whole worlds to death and make them when he please. Literally he can do all his pleasure, in heaven and on earth, throughout all space, and throughout all time! If all men, if all angels, if all worlds were to conspire against him, it would be only as an atom magnifying itself against a mountain, or a feather attempting to resist a whirlwind! And observe, this omnipotent power is seated in his will; he willed that innumerable angels should exist, and innumerable angels did exist; he willed that unnumbered worlds should be formed, and unnumbered worlds were formed. Yes, by his almighty fiat, by the mysterious energy of his will, the sun, the earth, the moon, the stars, yea, all creation, rose from the womb of unessential night, and in beauty, in order, and grandeur, rolled around his eternal throne; and should he now only will it, the sun, the earth, the moon, the stars, yea, all creation, would immediately roll back into their original nothing, and give place for a new display of the all-creating and omnipotent energy of his will. O, this mighty, MIGHTY God! who, by the omnipotent power of his will can bring into existence men and angels, and worlds and systems, and then blot them out for ever; what can we say but utter the language of the text, "O Lord, my God; thou art very great!" But the greatness of God appears,

IV. In the mighty work of creation. We have spoken of his omnipotence as an attribute; here we have its sublime demonstration. How vast is this creation, and how wonderful in all its parts! How many suns, how many worlds, how many systems! How great their magnitude, and how immense the space in which they move! Light, we are told, moves at the rate of one hundred and eighty thousand miles in a second of time, and yet it will take five years for a ray of light to pass from our sun to the nearest star. But such facts immediately confound and overwhelm us. Let us take another view. The globe which we inhabit is really a great globe, being nearly eight thousand miles in diameter, and twenty-five thousand in circumference. What towering mountains does it contain, what broad rivers, what vast oceans, what numerous islands, what extended continents, and what a vast population! If this world of ours is deemed large, what shall we say of yonder sun, which is nearly thirteen hundred thousand times larger still? If a globe of fire, as some suppose, what an immense fiery globe, which, if hollow, could with ease receive into its bosom more than a million of such worlds as ours is!—and if habitable, like our earth, as others think, then what mountains, what rivers, what oceans, what islands, what continents, and what a population! And, after all, what is this earth, and yonder sun, and all its planets, to all

the other suns, and worlds, and systems, which telescopic glass have spread out before the eye of man? Only as the fringe upon the garment of creation, or as a small village in some vast empire; for astronomers tell us that there are eighty millions of suns discovered, around which roll, by estimation, two billions four hundred millions of worlds; and all these may be only as the outskirts of some still mightier creation; and God made them all! Not only so, he made them without materials, and with infinite ease; he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. Another idea is this: This immense, immense universe is all in motion; each sun, and world, and system, rolling in its appointed orbit with a velocity most astonishing; swifter than the whirlwind passing over the bosom of the deep, or the meteor streaming along the archway of heaven, or the ball thrown from the mouth of the thundering cannon. And God bears up all, as in the hollow of his hand! A giant would stagger under the weight of a small rock, and an army of giants could not roll one mountain, or heave one ocean; but God Almighty with infinite ease bears up all worlds, and with infinite ease can heave and roll swiftly the whole creation. O Lord, my God, thou art very great! But once more, the greatness of God appears,

V. In the work of redemption. This presents a new view of the greatness of God, exhibiting

his moral grandeur; and it is this which makes him emphatically and supremely great indeed. Infinitely great in goodness as he is infinitely great in power; infinitely great in all his moral as in all his natural perfections; so that, in the sublimest sense, it may be said of him that "He is a God, all o'er consummate, absolute, full orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete." In the work of redemption, what did God do? He reconciled the claims of conflicting attributes, and in the plan of saving sinful man from a deserved and everlasting hell, he caused each and all of his divine attributes to shine out with peerless and dazzling splendour. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. God could have made a greater universe than he has made, but we cannot see how it is possible for God, infinite as he is, to have made a greater gift than he has done, so that the poet has well said,

God, in the person of his Son,
Hath all his mightiest works outdone.

"If in creation we see the hand of God, in redemption we see his heart." If in the work of creation there be a display of God's natural perfections which has a height and depth we cannot fathom, in the work of redemption, we have, in the exhibition of his moral perfections,

an ocean without bottom and without shore. Indeed, according to the Scriptures, the work of redemption is presented to us as that which is to the Lord for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty; the master-piece and chief work of the Great God: that, indeed, for which all things else were brought into being; as it is written, God hath created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent (that is, for this specific purpose) that now unto the principalities and powers, in heavenly places, might be known by the church, (Eph. iii. 9, 10, 11,) the manifold wisdom of God. If, then, creation be a casket, redemption is the richest jewel in that casket; and if creation be to the Lord, as we have said, a crown of glory, redemption is the most resplendent gem which glitters in that crown of glory. In the sacred volume we find it written, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty;" in the same volume we also find this exclamation, "How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!" Zech. ix. 16. A being then, who is infinitely good, as well as infinitely powerful; who is, in short, infinite in everything that is great and glorious, how great, how exceedingly great must such a Being be! This is the God whom we worship and adore; our God for ever and ever. "O Lord, my God, thou art very, very great!"

A few inferences, and I have done.

1. How reasonable it is that we should wor-

ship and serve this only living and true God. Hence the beautiful language of the Psalmist: "O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise unto the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms, for the Lord is a great God, and a great king above all gods. In his hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is his also. The sea is his, and he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker, for he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand." Yes it is reasonable that we, that *all* should worship and serve the only living and true God, hence the language of the Psalmist again: "O sing unto the Lord a new song. Sing unto the Lord all the earth. Sing unto the Lord; bless his name. Show forth his salvation from day to day; declare his glory among the heathen; his wonders among all people, for the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods, for all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens. Honour and majesty are before him, strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; bring an

offering and come into his courts. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, fear before him all the earth."

"Before Jehovah's awful throne,
Ye nations bow with sacred joy,
Know that the Lord is God alone,
He can create, and he destroy.

His sovereign power, without our aid,
Made us of clay, and formed us men,
And when like wandering sheep we strayed,
He brought us to his fold again.

We are his people, we his care,
Our souls, and all our mortal frame;
What lasting honours shall we rear,
Almighty Maker, to thy name?

We'll crowd thy gates with thankful songs,
High as the heavens our voices raise,
And Earth, with her ten thousand tongues,
Shall fill thy courts with sounding praise.

Wide as the world is thy command—
Vast as eternity thy love—
Firm as a rock thy truth must stand,
When rolling years shall cease to move."

Alleluia! The Lord God omnipotent reigneth!
Amen, Alleluia!

2. How dreadful a thing it must be to have this great God for our enemy!—a God so great and powerful, who is, literally, everywhere present, and who, literally, can do all things! Who can escape his notice, or elude his grasp, or escape his power? Assuredly, "He that

can create, and can destroy,"—"He that can dash whole worlds to death, and make them when he please;" assuredly, he can in a moment hurl the sinner down to hell, and chain him there in darkness and despair! Yea, can destroy both soul and body in hell, and that for ever! O my friends, the apostle says, and truly does the apostle say, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Let men hate me, let men torment me, let the stormy cloud rain thunderbolts upon me, and the terrific whirlwind sweep me away, and dash me upon the rugged rocks, but let not the great God of heaven and earth be mine enemy! for in the day of his wrath, who shall be able to stand? and his wrath, once kindled, burns furiously, and burns for ever. O sinner! impenitent sinner! fear the God who made you. "Who would not fear thee? O king of nations," says the prophet, "who would not fear thee? for to thee doth it appertain." Surely it is right and proper that we should fear what is a proper object of fear, and if God be indeed the great God which we have proved him to be, certainly it is right and proper that he should be feared, hence the language of Peter, "Fear God;" and the language of the Psalmist, "Stand in awe, and sin not;" and this language again, "Tremble thou earth at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob;" and yet many fear not

God! God says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy;" but they refuse to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. God says, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;" but this command also, they daily trample upon, as they do many, many others. The fact is, many have no fear of God before their eyes, and positively treat him as if he were a cipher and worthy of no regard. They fear man, but fear not God, who made man. They fear the jarring elements, but fear not God who controls the jarring elements. Yes, the wrath of man, and the violence of conflicting elements, will make them tremble and turn pale, but they fear not that God in whom they live and move and have their being; who can, in a moment of time, raise them to heaven, and number them with the bright and happy spirits around his throne; or sink them down to hell, and link them with spirits accursed and damned for ever! Surely there is madness in the sinner's heart. O sinner, fear God, that it may be well with you in the latter end. But, do not misunderstand the matter, when we call upon you to fear God, we do not call upon you to exercise a slavish, but a filial fear: and these are widely different. The one may consist with the deadliest enmity; the other only with the liveliest affection. The one is the fear of a slave towards a cruel tyrant; the other is the

fear of a child towards an affectionate parent. The one has nothing of true religion in it; the other is the very essence thereof. In short, the fear required is the fear of a Joseph, who, when tempted to sin, said, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God." And now, my dear impenitent friends, remember, you who have no Saviour, remember you have not yet made your peace with God, and you and God must meet! You have sinned against him, lo, these many years! and, be sure, your sin will find you out! O what will you do when God shall require your soul? What will you do when, amid all the terrors of the judgment day you shall hear the sound depart?

"O wretched state of deep despair
To see my God remove,
And fix my doleful station where
I must not taste his love."

O my unconverted friends! you have slumbered over your eternal interests too long; wake up, at last, I beseech you, O wake up to the high claims of God and eternity. And I would now say, in the language of the Saviour, "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him, lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison; verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence

till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing!" O! to be lost, and lost for ever! even for ever and ever! Think upon that, and may God have mercy upon your souls!

3. How blessed it is to have God upon our side. If God, the great God, be for us, who can be against us? He who is infinite in wisdom and in power, he who has a control over all means and agents, what a powerful friend and protector must he be! Hence the language of the Psalmist, "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth and even for ever!" And again: "The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" Ah, my brethren, if God be upon our side we are safe and happy for time and for eternity! and well may it be said, happy is that people who is in such a case, yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord! This happiness belongs to all the truly pious of every place and every age. Yes, it is the privilege of each and all such to say with the sweet singer of old, "This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death." And again: "The Lord liveth; and blessed be my Rock;" and, in the language of our text, "O Lord, my God, thou art very great." There is oftentimes great meaning and great sweetness in the little pro-

noun, *my*. And if it be pleasant sometimes to be able to say, this is *my* house, *my* field, *my* wife, *my* child, how much more delightful, yea, infinitely more delightful, after contemplating the grandeur of the Eternal King, to be able to say, "this God is *our* God, for ever and ever!" Yes, great and glorious as he is, this—the Christian may say—this is *my* Heavenly Father, the friend and portion of my soul; very pleasant therefore must have been the feelings of the Psalmist when he uttered the language of our text, "O Lord, my God, thou art very great." This is the language of joy, of triumph, and of complete exultation, reminding us of the well known language of Moses, "Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." My brethren, I repeat it, if God be for us who can be against us? He is a shield and buckler to his people on earth, and afterwards he will receive them to glory. He was a shield to the patriarch Jacob. You recollect this man of God, having been improperly treated by his father-in-law, Laban, leaves him, and with his family and all that he had, sets out on his journey to see his father Isaac, who was still alive. When Laban heard that Jacob was gone, he gathered a force and pursued after him, resolved it seems to bring him back. The very night however, before he came up with Jacob, the Lord ap-

peared to Laban the Syrian in a dream, and said unto him, Speak not a word to Jacob, good or bad. The next day he overtakes Jacob, and still wrathful, he said, It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt, but the Lord God of your fathers appeared to me yesternight, saying, Speak not a word to Jacob, good or bad. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man to whom thou art a shield and buckler! Jacob thus protected, continues his journey. On his way to the dwelling place of Isaac he must needs pass by Mount Seir, the dwelling place of Esau. It will be recollected that some twenty years before, Esau had threatened that he would slay Jacob. Drawing near to Mount Seir, and remembering this, Jacob sends messengers to Esau, to conciliate him. Esau deigned no reply, and Jacob's messengers returned to him, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him; then Jacob was greatly afraid, and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and the herds, and the camels, into two bands, and said, If Esau come to the one company and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape. Having made this arrangement, he turned aside to pray, and we may judge of the feelings of his heart from the words of his lips: "O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, deliver me, I pray thee,

from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him lest he come and smite me, and the mother with the children." And now the moment of meeting arrives; and as Esau lifted up his eyes and beheld Jacob his brother, the Lord touched Esau's heart, and he ran to meet his brother, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept! O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man whom thou dost shield and protect! The Lord can hold the enemy in check by a vision of the night, or by converting a heart of enmity into a heart of love! yea, in many ways. Take one case more: Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, had sworn that Elijah should not live another day. Elijah hears of the threat, and went a day's journey into the wilderness, and sat down under a juniper tree. Methinks I see this venerable man under the juniper tree. He is in great sadness. Methinks I hear him sigh, methinks I see the tears trickling down his furrowed cheeks. But now he prays, and we may judge of the feelings of his heart from the language of his lips. It is enough now, O Lord, said he, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers. And now, my brethren, see that Elijah who would willingly have died under the juniper tree, without a friend to close his eyes or dig his grave—only see! the heavens are opened! the heavens are opened! and lo, a chariot of fire, and horses of

fire descend, and that good man who would fain have died under the juniper tree, without a friend to close his eyes or dig his grave—only see how he is rapt away in triumph to the bosom of his God, in glory! Of a truth, “he has found a most secure abode, who has made his refuge God.” “The Lord is thy keeper,” says the Psalmist, “the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth and even for evermore.” So that we may say to the humblest child of God,

“Go and return secure from death
Till God command thee home.”

Then comes joy, heavenly joy; bliss, unutterable and everlasting bliss! O think what a full tide of joy an infinite God can pour into our souls, through all the ages of eternity! O, my brethren, believe me, riches are nothing; honours are nothing; worldly pleasures are nothing; thrones and kingdoms nothing, in comparison with the favour of God. Thy favour, O God, is life; thy loving kindness is better than life; for if God, the great God of heaven and earth be for us, who can be against us? O! then seek his favour, and may you never rest until you find sweet repose in the bosom of a God reconciled through the mediation of his Son. Amen.

SERMON III.

CHRIST THE MEDIATOR.

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God : but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men : and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. PHIL. ii. 6—11.

IN these words, my brethren, we have,

- I. *The mediatorial character, work, and glory of Christ; and*
- II. *The grand design of the whole.*

I. The mediatorial character, work, and glory of Christ.—By the mediatorial *character* of Christ, we are to understand, not his essential, but his official character—that which he, as mediator, sustains in the economy of man's redemption. Had man never existed; or existing, had never fallen; or fallen, had never been redeemed, the Eternal Son of God had never assumed the name of Jesus Christ or Mediator. This is, unquestionably, that new name spoken of in the book of Revelation, iii. 12, and

that name which is above every name, made mention of in the passage now before us. Entering upon the glorious work of man's redemption, he assumes a new name, and sustains a new character. This character is commonly denominated his mediatorial character. The scope of our text would lead us, however, to speak, not so much of those offices which belong to the mediatorial character of Christ, as of that union of the human and divine nature in the person of Christ, upon which the mediatorial character is founded, and which indeed gives to it all its dignity, and sweetness, and excellence, and perfection. Here it will be necessary for us, by sound scriptural argument, to establish this proposition, that *Jesus Christ, as Mediator, possesses two natures—the divine and human—in mysterious, yet all-harmonious union.* This is a doctrine of prime importance. It lies at the very foundation of the whole Christian system; and with it, the most precious hopes of the believer must live or die. No wonder, then, if we be tenacious for this doctrine; no wonder if we cling to it as the miser clings to his gold; for "if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" In establishing this point, we shall adduce only one argument, with some collateral proofs—I say only one argument, but that, humbly conceived to be, both clear and unanswerable—it is this: In this volume, the

Bible, there are certain things affirmed of Jesus Christ, which can properly be affirmed only of the *human* nature; and yet, in the very same volume, certain other things are affirmed of him which can properly be affirmed only of the *divine* nature. Now these two classes of affirmations, in the very nature of the case, cannot be true, except on the principle that Jesus Christ possesses, as we have said, both the human and divine nature, in mysterious, yet all-harmonious union. How do we prove that a living man possesses both a soul and body in union? Very much in this way. Speaking of this man, for example, I say that he has flesh, bones, blood, and is mortal. These things, we all see, belong not to his soul, but to his body, and prove—what? Certainly that he has a true body. Yet, speaking of the very same individual, I change my language, and also affirm that he has memory, will, and understanding, and is immortal. Now here is a new set of attributes, which evidently belong not to the body, but to the soul, and prove—what? Assuredly, that this man has also a soul, a reasonable soul. The connecting link between the soul and the body may be unseen; the union may be absolutely inscrutable. It matters not, the facts are clear, and therefore the inference is irresistible: this man has, in himself, mind and matter united; he has both a soul and a body, in mysterious, yet

all-harmonious union. Now let us bring this principle of reasoning to bear upon the case in hand. And first, with regard to the human nature of Christ. Here we need not enlarge; the doctrine is not controverted; we need only remind you of those passages of Scripture, which tell us plainly, that Jesus Christ was born of a woman; was made under the law—and that he wept, hungered, thirsted, died! These things, we all see, appertain not to the divine nature, but to the human, and prove—what? Certainly that Jesus Christ possessed the human nature; was very man, had a true body, and a reasonable soul; was as truly a man as any in this assembly. This is a precious doctrine; we have never denied it—the apostle never did—his language is this: “Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same.”

But with regard to the second point, that in connection with the human nature our Saviour also possessed a nature strictly speaking *divine*. Notice the affirmations in our text: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Here are two affirmations, having reference to the supreme divinity of Christ. Take the first, “Who, being in the form of God.” Here, the apostle affirms that, originally, Jesus Christ was in the form of God. Now as God is an infinite spirit, possessed of incommunicable attributes, and arrayed in

peerless, uncreated glory, it is very certain that no mere creature can possess the real form of God; and that it is the real, and not assimilated form of God, is evident from what the apostle says in his epistle to the Hebrews, i. 3, where he declares Jesus Christ to be the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. "The brightness of the Father's glory." Now as the brightness of the natural sun in the heavens is of the same nature and date with that great luminary itself, and may be distinguished, but not separated, even so, in the unity of the Godhead, the Father and the Son are in essence one and the same, co-equal, co-eternal. They may be distinguished, but not separated. When, therefore, the apostle declares that Jesus Christ was in the form of God, the idea is this, that Jesus Christ possesses in himself, really and substantially, all the perfections of God the Father's person. In confirmation of this, notice the following remarkable facts: 1. That the sublimest works of the Supreme God are ascribed to Christ.—Is creation the work of God? No man denies it; and yet John tells us that "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." John i. 3. Is preservation the work of God? Who denies that? And yet Paul tells us that Jesus Christ upholdeth all things by the word of his power. Heb. i. 3. Is the work of resurrection the work of

God? Who but an omnipotent God can wake up the slumbering nations of the dead, whose ashes have been scattered to the four winds of heaven; buried, it may be, beneath the mountain's base and the ocean's wave? Yet the blessed Saviour says, "*I am the resurrection and the life; I will raise him up at the last day.*" John xi. 25. Is the work of final judgment the work of God? The Bible says expressly, God is judge himself, and yet the apostle says, "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." 2 Cor. v. 10. But the doctrine before us falls in with another remarkable fact, that the sublimest names of the supreme God are given to Jesus Christ, viz. *God*. Thus the Everlasting Father, addressing the Son, says, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Heb. i. 8. "True God;" thus John says, "Jesus Christ, this is the true God." 1 John v. 20. "Mighty God." Isa. ix. 6. "The Lord of Glory." 1 Cor. ii. 8. "The Prince of Life." Acts iii. 15. "The First and the Last." Rev. ii. 8. "The Almighty." Rev. i. 8. "Over all, God blessed for ever." Rom. ix. 5. Now, give these names to Peter, or to Paul, to Michael, to Gabriel, to the loftiest angel in heaven, and there is blasphemy in it; and yet they are given to Christ, and that, too, by those who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. This can be accounted for only by the fact stated, that Jesus Christ possesses in himself, really and substantially, all the per-

fections of God the Father's person. And notice how this doctrine falls in with another remarkable fact, that the sublimest honours of the Supreme God are given to Jesus Christ. Witness the language of Thomas—"My Lord, and my God." Witness what is said of Stephen, the first martyr—"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit." Witness the form of baptism: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Now whatever is to be implied in the name of the Father, is of course also to be implied in the name of the Son. But hark! pæans are sounding in the world above! "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and honour, and glory, and blessing." Rev. v. 12. There is no adoration loftier than this; no worship, more strictly speaking, divine; yet Jesus Christ is the object of it. What makes this matter more remarkable is this: It is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Accordingly, we find that no good man, no good angel, ever consented to receive divine honours. No good man:—Paul and Barnabas were good men: having wrought a stupendous miracle at Lystra, the people cried out, in the language of Lycaonia, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men:" and the priests of Jupiter brought oxen and garlands to the gates of the

city, and would have done sacrifice with the people—would have paid Paul and Barnabas divine honours. Did these good men consent? They rent their clothes, and ran in amongst the people, crying out and saying, “Sirs! why do ye these things? we are men of like passions with you.” No good angel ever consented to receive divine honours. You recollect a good angel once appeared to John, in the Isle of Patmos. John, dazzled by the effulgence of his splendour, fell down at his feet to worship him. Did this good angel consent to receive this divine honour? He was in a hurry to repel it; “I am thy fellow servant—worship God.” See, then, how good men and angels all point to supreme divinity as the only proper object of religious worship and adoration. Now, is it not remarkable that the blessed Saviour himself appeared to the same John, in the same Isle of Patmos, and John, dazzled by the effulgence of his splendour, fell down at his feet also? Did the blessed Saviour give the holy apostle any charge against worshipping *him*? Mark the difference! He laid his right hand upon him, saying, “Fear not, I am the First and the Last! I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and of death!” And this reminds me of that sublime doxology uttered by the same exile in Patmos, in his own name and that of the whole church, militant and trium-

phant—"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever." Mark, "to *him* who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood—to *him* be glory and dominion, for ever and ever." Let any being be invested with glory and dominion for ever and ever, and he is invested with the honours of supreme divinity—he ascends the throne of the universe, and he is inaugurated God over all. These things, in relation to Jesus Christ, are very remarkable, and can be explained, as I humbly conceive, only on the ground already stated, that Jesus Christ possesses in himself, really and substantially, all the perfections of God the Father's person. In confirmation of this position, take this passage of Scripture: "Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen *me* hath seen the *Father*: and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" John xiv. 8, 9, 10. To crown the matter, notice how the apostle expresses the doctrine almost in the very words which we have uttered: "In him (Jesus Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Col. ii. 9. How strong is

this language! Every word emphatic! In him, Jesus Christ, dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, bodily. If this does not express the idea of God incarnate—literally God *incarnate*—what idea does it present? And here I would remark—as thought, written or uttered, is thought embodied, so Christ, in human form, is God made manifest in the flesh.

Having introduced the term “Godhead,” permit me to make a remark or two touching the mysterious and sublime doctrine of the Trinity. Some stumble at it, and why?—On the supposed ground of its involving an absurdity. Now, we positively affirm, that the doctrine of a triune God, as we receive it, does not involve even the shadow of an absurdity; for, when we say that there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory—observe, we do not say that they are three in the same sense in which they are one; nor one in the same sense in which they are three. That would be an absurdity: we simply say, in one sense three, in another sense one. Is there anything incredible in this? By no means. Rain, hail, and snow, are three distinctions of one and the very same element. And although I would not say, that rain is hail, nor that hail is snow, yet I will say, what I have a right to say, and what is

certainly most true—in substance *one*; in distinction *three*. Just so with regard to the unity of the Godhead. Although I would not say, that the Father is the Son, nor the Son the Holy Ghost, yet I will say, what I have a right to say, and what is certainly a great Bible truth—in essence *one*; in distinction *three*. Do I introduce this illustration to explain the mode of the divine subsistence? Certainly not. I cannot explain the mode of my own existence, how then can I explain that of my Maker, who is an infinite Spirit? I introduce the illustration, simply to show that there is no occasion for stumbling here, particularly when we remember that it is written, “Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth—it is broader than the sea.”*

* According to philosophers, and, what is incomparably better, according to the apostle Paul, man himself, who is said to have been made after the similitude of God—yes, man himself consists of three distinctions: body, soul, and spirit. 1 Thess. v. 23. By the body, we understand the material frame; by the soul, the animal life, which we have in common with the brutes that perish; and by the spirit, (usually called the soul,) the immortal principle. Now here, we perceive, even in ourselves, according to this statement, a threefold existence, not only in union, but in unity. Why then should we stumble at the doctrine of the Trinity as

But to resume the argument touching the supreme divinity of Christ: take the second affirmation in our text—"Thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Now, as a good writer observes, If Jesus Christ thought it not robbery to be equal with God, it was no robbery; and if no robbery, he was equal; and if equal, he must be God. But some one may say, "If Jesus Christ be, strictly speaking, a divine person, how can he, being divine, being God, be said to be equal with God? Will not this, then, imply that there are two Gods, equal, separate, and independent?" I answer, that in a matter so far removed beyond all comparison, and all similitude, illustrations are rarely proper. I will however introduce one, simply to show that the thing is by no means incredible. Water, in a vessel, may subsist under two forms; as a fluid, and as a solid;

revealed in the sacred volume? The truth is, in our catechisms, creeds, and confessions, the doctrine of the Trinity is presented, if I may so speak, in a skeleton form, and therefore presented to great disadvantage, for no *skeleton* has any charms; but in the sacred volume, it is presented in living beauty, each person in the adorable Godhead being there presented as sustaining some peculiar office in the economy of redemption. For example: the Father is represented as planning the glorious scheme of man's redemption; the Son as executing that scheme, and the Holy Ghost, as applying to all believers the benefits of that planned and purchased redemption, and thus exhibiting the Godhead to a ruined world, in glorious, yet distinct manifestations.

or as water and ice. They may be compared with each other, and one may be said to be equal with the other; but if you do not like our interpretation, here is the passage, and what will you do with it?—"Thought it not robbery to be equal with God." If Jesus Christ possess not a nature, strictly speaking, divine, he must of course be a mere creature—a *finite* being! My brethren, you may compare a grain of sand with the whole earth; a drop of water with the mighty ocean; and even a ray of light with yonder stupendous orb of day; but, verily, you may not compare a creature with the uncreated God; nor that which is finite, with that which is infinite. In no sense whatever, can there be an equality—with no propriety whatever, can there be even a comparison. The case then is clear, JESUS CHRIST IS GOD: that is, possesses in himself, really and substantially, all the perfections of God, the Father's Person. We have shown that Jesus Christ possesses also a human nature. Our great doctrine then is established, that Jesus Christ, as Mediator, possesses two natures, the divine and human, in mysterious, yet all-harmonious union. Ah! this *mysterious* union! Some

* I am aware that those who reject our doctrine, give another rendering to this passage, and indeed to every passage which we have quoted, or shall yet quote, numerous as they are. Strange that so many passages should have been wrongly translated!

stumble at the *mystery* of the incarnation; and is not the union of soul and body in man a mystery? and yet who stumbles at this? Having evidence of the fact, we believe the one; why not, having evidence of the fact, believe the other also? But was the apostle Paul aware of the mystery? He was. Did *he* stumble at it? I give you his own words, you can judge as well as I. "Without controversy," says he, "great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh." 1 Tim. iii. 6. Observe: he admits it to be a *mystery*—he goes farther; he admits it to be a *great mystery*; moreover, he would have us to understand, that there is no use to have any controversy upon this point. The mystery of the incarnation is not denied. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh." Now if the apostle did not stumble at the mystery of the human and divine nature in the person of Christ, neither do I—nay, more, he gloried in it, Rom. ix. 5; and therefore so will I. And, indeed, well may we all; for, as I shall now show you, if it be a mystery, it is a blessed mystery—full of sweetness as well as full of wonder; for, observe,

1. How essential the twofold nature of Christ is to the various parts of his mediatorial work. For example: he must have a human nature to obey the law which man had violated, and thus to magnify the law and

make it honourable; but it is equally necessary, in this matter, that he should have a divine nature also, to give merit to his obedience. Suppose that Jesus Christ were a mere man, what could his obedience avail? He would have to say, as we do, I am an unprofitable servant; I have done no more than was my duty; but, according to the Scriptures, by his obedience shall many be made righteous. So he must have a human nature to obey the law, and the divine nature to stamp value upon that obedience. Again: he must have a human nature to suffer, and the divine nature to give efficacy to those sufferings. Yes, according to the Scriptures, the Mediator must suffer, as it is written, "He must suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and the third day rise again." Matt. xvi. 21. And again: "It behoved Christ to suffer." Luke xxiv. 46. And again: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" Luke xxiv. 26. Nay more, it is written, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." Heb. ix. 22. In order to make an atonement then, Christ must become a substitutionary sacrifice—must suffer; but the divine nature cannot suffer, cannot be wounded for our transgressions, nor bruised for our iniquities; hence, Christ must have a human nature, to suffer; but here again it is equally necessary that he should have a divine

nature, as we have stated, to give efficacy to his sufferings; for, suppose Jesus Christ were no more than a mere man, what could his sufferings avail? The martyrs suffered much, their blood flowed in torrents! but we never hear that the blood of the martyrs availed to the washing away of a single sin of their own; but with regard to this mysterious sufferer, it is said, "His blood cleanseth from all sin." 1 John i. 7. And again: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" John i. 29. Thus you perceive it is necessary that Jesus Christ, as Mediator, should possess a human nature to suffer, and also a divine nature to give efficacy to those sufferings. But some man may say, "Sir, you have thrown some light upon this point, but the point is not clear yet. You say that the human nature cannot merit, nor the divine nature suffer, then, after all, how can the sufferings of the human nature of Christ have so much efficacy?" I reply, there is no difficulty here at all. Here is a clod of earth. In that form you may strike it about at pleasure—no harm done; but let this clod of earth be formed into the body of a man; let it be united to the soul of a man, a prince, a king, a conqueror! and, verily, you may not now strike it about at your pleasure! Who does not see that an injury done to that clod of earth, in its new form, as united to the soul of a man, a prince,

a king, a conqueror, is to all intents and purposes, the same as an injury done to the soul of that man, that prince, that king, that conqueror? The case then is simply this, although the human nature of Christ could not merit, nor his divine nature suffer, yet by virtue of the union of the human and divine nature in the person of Christ, the sufferings of the human, are as if they were the sufferings of the divine nature. "It is the altar which sanctifies the gift." The Saviour himself furnishes the illustration. The divine nature is the altar, the human nature of Christ is the victim offered upon that altar, and the altar sanctifies the gift—the very illustration of Christ himself!

But again: Christ, as Mediator, must have a human nature to have a brother's heart; a divine nature, to have an almighty arm. You recollect that when God descended, in terrible majesty, upon Sinai's awful mount, the people, greatly alarmed, removed and stood afar off, and said unto Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not God speak with us, lest we die." Nay, even Moses himself exclaimed, "I do exceedingly fear and quake!" How natural then to wish, with the man of Uz, that there were some days-man to lay his hand upon both parties. In our blessed Redeemer this desire is fully met; for, as we have said, he has a human nature to have a

brother's heart, a divine nature to have an almighty arm. Both natures are equally necessary, for suppose that Christ had a human nature only, then certainly he could have a brother's heart, could sympathize with us, being touched with a fellow feeling of our infirmities, and this would be soothing; but if this were all, amid all his tender sympathies, we might sink down in hopeless sorrow! But O! delightful truth! our Mediator is in all respects, fitted for his appointment. As a man he has all the innocent sensibilities of our nature:

“He knows what sore temptations mean,
For he has felt the same.”

“We have not an High Priest,” says the apostle, “who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.” Yes, it is even so:

“He, in the days of feeble flesh,
Poured out his cries and tears;
And in his measure feels afresh
What every member bears.”

This is a precious doctrine. The human nature of Christ brings him very near to our hearts, and the idea, that, exalted as he is, he can be touched with a fellow feeling of our infirmities, is, I repeat it, very soothing; but if this were all, what would it avail to the saving

of our souls? No! He must have something more than sympathy, he must have power. He must have something more than a brother's heart, he must have an almighty arm! and, according to our doctrine, so it is: hence, in the Scriptures, he is presented to us as one able to save unto the uttermost. Heb. vii. 25. O glorious Mediator! O precious Redeemer! One who has all the glories of a God, attempered with the milder beauties of a perfect man! One so distant, and yet so near! Only think, my brethren, (sweet thought!) our blessed Saviour has a human nature, to have a brother's heart!—a divine nature, to have an almighty arm!

“Till God in human flesh I see,
 My thoughts no comfort find;
 The Holy, Just, and Sacred Three,
 Are terrors to my mind;
 But if Immanuel's face appear.
 My hope, my joy begins;
 His name forbids my slavish fear,
 His grace removes my sins.
 While Jews on their own law rely,
 And Greeks of wisdom boast,
 I love th'incarnate mystery,
 And there I fix my trust.”

If the twofold nature of Christ be a mystery, (and I deny it not,) it is a blessed mystery, full of sweetness as well as full of wonder; for, observe,

2. How beautifully it falls in with the ac-

count given of our blessed Saviour, whilst he tabernacled here on earth. In this account, circumstances of humility, and circumstances of grandeur, are made strangely and sweetly to blend together in the person of Christ; pointing out, at the same time, both his *human* and *divine* nature. See the blessed Saviour, born in Bethlehem; born of a woman, and laid in a manger! Here are circumstances of humility, pointing out his *human* nature; but mark the circumstances of grandeur proclaiming his *divine* nature. A star announces his birth, and angels sing his natal song! See him at the grave of Lazarus! He weeps *like a man*; and then, with authority, says, "Lazarus, come forth!" *like a God*. Approaching the barren fig-tree, he hungers *like a man*; and then, with a word, withers the fig-tree away, *like a God*. During a raging storm on the sea of Tiberias, he lay in the hinder part of the ship, with his head upon a pillow; he slept *like a man*. Being called upon, he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, *like a God*. Having wrought a stupendous miracle, he goes into a mountain apart to pray, *like a man*; and at the fourth watch of the night, he comes to his disciples, walking upon the water, *like a God*. *As a man*, he pays tribute money; *as a God*, he causes a fish of the deep to bring to him the tribute money. Disciples of Christ! O see your Saviour, on yonder bloody tree! nailed to the

cross, he suffers *like a man*; and yet, in the midst of his sufferings, he opens the gates of Paradise to the dying thief, *like a God*. And see, too, in yonder sepulchre, alas! in yonder sepulchre—the hope of Israel, wrapt in the winding-sheet, lies, pale and cold in death, *like a man*. But lo! in the morning of the third day, by his own immortal energies, he burst the bands of death, and arose triumphant, *like a God*! And see him, too, after his resurrection: he meets with his disciples, takes a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honey-comb, and did eat with them, *like a man*. And then he leads them out to Bethany and blesses them; and as he blesses them, he ascends in a cloud in radiant majesty, far above all heavens, *a God confessed*! God is gone up with a shout! The Lord with the sound of a trumpet! Sing praises unto God; sing praises! Sing praises unto our King; sing praises!

“All hail the power of Jesus’ name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.”

3. If the union of the human and divine nature in the person of Christ be a mystery, it is a blessed mystery, for it serves very clearly and beautifully to harmonize many passages of Scripture which on no other principle, I verily believe, can be made to harmonize. For ex-

ample: In one place Jesus Christ is called a man; in another place, God. Heb. i. 8. In one place, David's Son, Matt. xxii. 42; in another place, David's Lord. Matt. xxii. 45. In one place he says, "My Father is greater than I;" John x. 29; in another place, "I and my Father are one." John x. 30. In one place he is said to be a Lamb slain; in another place, the Prince of Life, who only hath immortality.* Now deny our doctrine, and I defy any man on earth, or angel in heaven, to reconcile these passages. Admit the doctrine and all is beautiful and harmonious. With regard to his *human* nature, Jesus Christ is a *man*; with regard to his *divine* nature, *God*; with regard to his *human* nature he is David's Son; with regard to his *divine* nature, David's Lord. Referring to his human nature, or official character, he can say, "My Father is greater than I;" referring to his divine nature, or essential character, he can say, "I and my Father are one." As to his *human* nature, he is a *Lamb slain*; as to his *divine* nature, the *Prince of Life*, who only hath immortality. And now to put the beautiful crown upon the whole, and to convince you that this is indeed the true scriptural doctrine, hear the words of the Saviour himself: "I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." Now this is a very remarkable passage of Scripture, and

* Compare Acts iii. 15; Rev. xix. 16; 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16.

should settle the doctrine of the twofold nature of Christ for ever; for observe, if Jesus Christ possessed the divine nature, and that only, he could most assuredly be David's root, the source of David's being; but in this case, how could he be David's offspring? On the other hand, if Jesus Christ possessed the human nature, and that only, he could then certainly be David's offspring; but here again, how, in this case, could he be David's root? the source of David's being? But possessing both the human and divine nature, he can say, as he does say, "I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star;" evidently referring to his mediatorial character. "Rising," as one remarks, "in his incarnation, as the bright and morning star, he introduced the gospel day; rising as the bright and morning star in the influences of his spirit, he introduces the day of grace and comfort in the sinner's soul; and rising, at last, in his bright appearing to judge the world, he will to his saints usher in the coronation-day—the day of a blest eternity. Bright and morning Star! Star of hope to the dying sinner! Star of hope to a sinking world! O shine upon this heart of mine!"

Having considered the mediatorial character of Christ, let us next consider his mediatorial work. And by this we are to understand all that our blessed Saviour did, and suffered, to

achieve the redemption of man, commonly termed his active and passive obedience. It would very far transcend the limits of this discourse, to lay before you in detail all the varied parts of the mediatorial work of Christ; nor is it necessary on the present occasion, for by a very common figure of speech, a part is here put for the whole; the apostle summing up the whole in the humiliation of Christ, and this, with singular propriety, in the connexion of our text, inasmuch as his deep humiliation on earth is here presented in striking contrast with the august dignity which he originally had, when, being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God. In this astonishing humiliation there are several steps.

1. "He was made in the likeness of men." That is, He, who originally "was the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person," was, in his incarnation, so veiled, so clouded, that he no longer appeared in the form of God, but in the likeness of men. "Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood," says the apostle, "he also himself took part of the same." What a stoop of condescension! The Prince of Life, and Lord of Glory, in the likeness of men!

"————— Harp! lift thy voice on high!
Shout angels! shout aloud ye sons of men,
And burn my heart with th' eternal flame!"

2. "He took upon him the form of a servant." Observe! This glorious One not only took upon him human nature, but human nature in a low condition: "He took upon him," says our text, "the form of a servant;" not the form of a prince, or a king, but the form of a servant. How wonderful is this! Nor was he ashamed to take this step of humiliation for the good of man, he rather gloried in it; and how touching are his allusions to this very thing! "The Son of Man," says he, "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister;" that is, to act the part of a servant. And again said he to his disciples, "Whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth." Blessed Jesus! But most emphatically did our great Redeemer assume the form of a servant, when, rising from the paschal supper, he laid aside his garment, and took a towel and girded himself, and having poured water into a basin, he began to wash his disciples' feet with water, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. And this is the Saviour that made my mother sing in death!—the same Jesus, who, as thousands have testified, "can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are." Sinner! this is the Saviour whom you neglect! Is this thy kindness to thy friend?

3. "He made himself of no reputation."

Even some servants have a high character, and are greatly esteemed, but the Lord of glory, in his mysterious incarnation, voluntarily places himself in those circumstances in which he received not the honours due to his name. "He came unto his own," says the apostle, "and his own received him not." Although he was the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Vallies, yet he was esteemed as a root out of a dry ground, having no form nor comeliness; nay, more, as predicted of him, he was despised and rejected of men! a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. O! tell me, did not our blessed Saviour appear as one without reputation when the Samaritans refused to receive him into their villages? when the Gadarenes besought him to depart out of their coast? and when the men of his own city, Nazareth, led him to the brow of the hill upon which their city was built, to cast him down headlong, as one unfit to live? O! tell me, did not the Saviour of lost men appear as one without reputation, when he was openly rejected by the chief priests and pharisees, and reproachfully called a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners? when he was betrayed by one disciple, denied by another, and forsaken by all? when the multitude came out against him, as against a thief, with swords and staves, to take him? See him arrested as a prisoner; bound as a

culprit; hurried to the hall of Caiaphas; taken to Pilate's judgment bar; sent to Herod; mocked by the soldiers; crowned with thorns; arrayed in a gorgeous robe, and then sent back to Pilate again. O, see him at Pilate's bar! False witnesses rise up against him!—none dare appear in his behalf! The hall, the court, the very heavens ring with the cry, "Crucify him! crucify him!" A prisoner must needs be released at the feast, and Barabbas is preferred! O, my soul! think upon this!—Barabbas, a robber, was preferred to the blessed Jesus! Barabbas, a murderer, to the spotless Son of God! And now, he is condemned! not by the voice of law, but by the clamour of popular fury. Pilate, it is true, calls for water, and washing his hands in the presence of the people, says, "I am innocent of the blood of this just man," yet gives him over into the hands of his enemies! And now what a scene of still deeper humiliation is presented! The blessed Saviour is blindfolded! he is smitten upon the cheek! he is spitted upon! he is buffeted! he is scourged!—Only think, scourged! And this is the One, who, according to the Scriptures, shall hereafter be seen coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory! O the strength of a Saviour's love! how astonishing does it appear when measured by the humiliation to which he submitted for our sakes? He made himself of no reputation!

But there is yet another step of still deeper humiliation stated in our text.

4. "He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross!" That the Prince of Life, and Lord of Glory, should die any death, however easy and honourable, is past all comprehension! But, such a death!—the death of the cross!—a death so shameful—so ignominious, and so accursed!—so bitter, so cruel, and so bloody, too! How were the rugged nails driven into his sacred hands and feet! How did his precious blood gush forth, stream down, and smoke upon the ground! O sinner! sinner! you know not the strength of a Saviour's love—you know not the tenderness of the dear Redeemer's heart! He died for you! died on the cross for you! and yet you slight him every day—turn your back upon him, and even trample under foot his precious blood! Hard-hearted, iron-hearted sinner! how could you serve your loving, dying Saviour so? "Hearts of stone! relent! relent!"—"Father forgive them, they know not what they do!"—Having considered the mediatorial character and work of Christ, we are next to contemplate his mediatorial glory.

By the mediatorial glory of Christ, we are to understand all that our blessed Redeemer receives, in his two-fold nature, as the reward of his mediatorial work. To this there is a reference in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah;

and upon this the apostle delights to expatiate. His language, here, is beautiful and sublime: "Wherefore, God also" (that is, the Father) "hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow; of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." Here the mediatorial glory of Christ is made to consist in two things, honour and dominion.

1. In Honour.—In his having a name which is above every name—the name of JESUS; the sweetest, the most charming name that men or angels ever heard! Verily, "'Tis music in the sinner's ears, 'tis life, and joy, and peace!" O! the sweetness of the name of Jesus, as it comes over the young convert with the power of a charm, bringing hope and comfort to his burdened soul! O! the sweetness of the name of Jesus, as it falls, like the music of heaven, upon the ear of the dying saint, enabling him to smile in death; and, in the full hope of glory, shout, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?"—and, O! who can tell the unutterable sweetness of the name of Jesus, as it rolls in choral symphonies from yonder heavenly throng, "loud as from numbers without number, and sweet as from blest voices uttering joy." The name of Jesus! It wakes up all the harps of heaven! it rolls a tide of

rapture all over the world of glory! All eyes are turned upon him! whilst voices innumerable, shout, "Worthy! worthy, is the Lamb!" Yes, my brethren,

"They praise him now, their hearts and voices praise,
And swell the rapture of the glorious song!
Amen! so let it be; shout, angels, shout!
And loudest, ye redeemed! Glory be to God,
And to the Lamb, who bought us with his blood;
And washed, and sanctified, and saved our souls;
And gave us robes of linen clean, and crowns of gold;
And made us kings and priests to God!"

In exact accordance with this is the language of the holy apostle, in that noble doxology, or song of praise, addressed to the great Redeemer in his own name, and that of the whole church, militant and triumphant: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father; to him be glory and dominion, for ever, Amen!" Yes, and every pious heart can well respond, Amen.

"O could I speak the matchless worth,
O could I sound the glories forth,
Which in my Saviour shine;
I'd soar, and touch the heavenly strings,
And vie with Gabriel while he sings,
In notes almost divine!

I'd sing the precious blood he spilt,
My ransom from the dreadful guilt,
Of sin and wrath divine;

I'd sing his glorious righteousness,
In which all perfect, heavenly dress,
My soul shall ever shine!"

But the mediatorial glory of Christ consists also,

2. In Dominion.—Yes, having finished the great work of atonement, and having ascended up on high, our great Redeemer is now, according to the Scriptures, exalted "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." Eph. i. 21. "He is Lord of all." Acts x. 36. He it is, who, walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks, holds the ministers as stars in his right hand: he it is, who, seated in the highest heavens, rules the church, and rules the world: and he it is, who, hereafter, "in that great day, for which all other days were made," shall sit as Judge of quick and dead. "Behold, he cometh with clouds," says the apostle, "and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." Yes, "hereafter"—(and mark, this is his own language)—"hereafter, shall ye see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." Matt. xxiv. 30; xxvi. 64. Although he shall come as the Son of Man, "clothed in a body like our own," yet, verily, none shall be able to think lightly

of him then; for he shall come with great power and glory—shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire. Lightnings shall flash from his piercing eyes! Thunders shall roll around his awful throne! He shall tread out the sun as a spark! shall break down the pillars of the earth; his voice shall rouse the slumbering dead, and from his lips shall go forth that sentence which shall fix the final doom of all mankind: and, verily, all who on earth despised him, shall then wail with a grievous and sore lamentation. In view of this, I would now say to every impenitent sinner present, in the language of the Psalmist, “Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little; blessed are all they who put their trust in him.” But it is time to consider,

II. The grand design of the whole, beautifully and comprehensively expressed by the apostle in these words—“to the glory of God the Father.” On this part of our subject we shall be brief. The heavens, in all their varied beauties, in all their wide and boundless magnificence, proclaim the glory of God—proclaim his wisdom, his grandeur, and his power; but believe me, brethren, we have something here which “outshines the wonders of the skies;” something which gives a development of the divine character to be found nowhere else, whatever. Yes, the great scheme of man’s

redemption is now, and ever will be, to the Lord emphatically for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty. For example,

It will be to the Lord a bright and imperishable monument of his *love*. "God so loved the world," says the Saviour, "that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Yonder sun in the heavens is exceedingly bright; but God could have made it brighter still! The universe is astonishingly great, but God could have made it greater still! But is there, can there be, any greater gift which the infinite God himself can bestow, than the gift of his Son? Hence the peculiar language of the Saviour—"God *so* loved the world;" and hence also the language of the apostle John—"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. And well may we say with one enraptured,

"Could we with ink the ocean fill,
Were the whole earth of parchment made;
Were every single stick a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky."

It will be to the Lord a bright and imperishable monument of his power, for it will appear

that it was in this way he destroyed the works of the devil, subdued the enemies of his government, conquered rebellious wills, softened hearts of rock, and thus redeemed and disenthralled a guilty and a ruined world!

It will be to the Lord a bright and imperishable monument of his justice. The lightnings which blasted rebel angels in heaven, and awful thunders ever rolling in the prison-house of the damned in hell, speak loudly this language in the ears of all the creatures which God has made—"Stand in awe, and sin not." But O! the tears, the groans, the streaming blood and dying agonies of the great Redeemer, Jehovah's Equal, God's Eternal Son, will sound the notes of warning louder still. If God spared not his own Son, when he was found in the law's place, and stead of the sinner, will he spare any sinner who has to answer for himself? Justice of heaven! how inflexible dost thou appear when thy glittering sword is seen bathed in Immanuel's blood! in the blood of an incarnate God! Once more:

The plan of redemption will be to the Lord a bright and imperishable monument of his wisdom, for here mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other. Yes, here "Justice and Mercy are both made illustrious, both made triumphant; one in punishing, and the other in pardoning. "An infinite sacrifice satisfies divine justice, and the

fruit of that sacrifice satisfies divine mercy." The fact is, in the glorious plan of man's redemption, all the divine perfections are made sweetly to harmonize; this is the grand focus, so to speak, in which their rays do meet and glow intensely. When man sinned, methinks holy angels struck their golden harps in plaintive strains, and cried, "Alas he is gone!—with fallen angels, man is gone for ever!" How can it be otherwise? Will a righteous God cease to be just? Will a holy God look with indulgence upon sin? Will the Ruler of all worlds permit his laws to be broken with impunity, and the honours of his government to lie trampled upon in the dust? Perish such a thought as this! It cannot be! Methinks it is repeated from world to world, It cannot be, and echoed back in dismal strains—Then man is lost! for ever lost!

But hark! a sweet voice is heard! It comes from Him who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. It comes from Him, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. "Lo! I come! In the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O God! a body wilt thou prepare me! I will take the sinner's place—upon me be the penalty of the law! I will bear the sins of mine elect, in my own body upon the tree! I will stoop beneath the grave, to save a sinking

world!" What new mystery is this? Angels stooping from their seats in bliss, desire to look into this great mystery of godliness: then, rising in admiration, they sweep the strings of their golden harps, and swelling their loftiest notes, they cry, as with the voice of mighty thunderings, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" My brethren, you have heard of the seven wonders of the world. Here we have the one great wonder of the universe!—the masterpiece of the great God! It is this which shall bind all worlds to the throne of the ever-blessed God! It is this which shall wake up the sweetest pæans in the heavenly world! It is this, which, through the mighty roll of everlasting ages, shall fill the courts of God Almighty with sounding praise!—to the glory of God the Father!

A few inferences, and I have done.

1. Here we have an unanswerable argument for the truth of the Christian religion—a doctrine such as we have now been considering; a doctrine of such mingled sweetness and grandeur, so worthy of God, and so suited to man; such a doctrine, if unrevealed, I firmly believe, could never have entered the mind of man. Wo to the infidel, he must meet a fiery day!

2. How invaluable must the soul of man be! To create worlds and systems required no

great array of means. God spake and it was done! He commanded, and it stood fast; but, to redeem the soul of man, all heaven must be moved! The Lord of angels must become incarnate, must suffer, and bleed, and agonize, and die. In other words, there must be a mighty draft, not upon the resources of nature, but upon the resources of nature's God.

“Heaven weeps, that man might smile,
Heaven bleeds, that man may never die.”

3. How dreadful is the guilt, and how terrible must be the doom of those who reject such a Saviour!—They reject, whom? A dying Saviour, who is God's eternal Son! They reject, whom? The world's last and only hope! There is salvation in none else; and, the sinner, dying without an interest in this Saviour, is accursed for ever! He is turned over to wrath and despair! He sinks down in the deep grave of sorrow, and no angel voice, no resurrection trump shall wake him up to hope and joy, any more! O sinner! sinner! You have rejected this Saviour already too long. O! be entreated to reject him no more! Submit now. This may be your last call, your last day!

4. How great will be the happiness of the redeemed in heaven!—After such preparation, and such cost, to bring them to that blessed world above, how dear, O how precious will

they be in the eyes of him who brought them there! How will he beautify them with salvation! How will he pour into their souls the full tide of heavenly and never-ending joy! "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him."

O heaven! sweet heaven! The dwelling place of love and joy! the purchase of a Saviour's blood! the Christian's rest, the pilgrim's home! O heaven, sweet heaven! There rolls the river of pleasure! there flourishes the tree of life! there saints and angels mingling their splendours, have one continued festival, one never-ending jubilee! "Visions of glory! how ye crowd upon my aching sight!" Praise God from the heavens; praise him in the heights. Praise ye him, all his angels; praise ye him, all his hosts. Praise ye him, sun and moon; praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise ye him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord. Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps. Fire, and hail, and snow, and vapour, and stormy wind fulfilling his word. Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars; beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl; kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth; both young men, and maidens, old men, and children; let them praise the

Lord; for his name alone is excellent, his glory is above the earth and heaven. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in the firmament of his power; praise him for his mighty acts; praise him according to his excellent greatness; praise him with the sound of the trumpet; praise him with the psaltery and harp; praise him with the timbrel and dance; praise him with stringed instruments and organs; praise him upon the loud cymbals, praise him upon the high-sounding cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!

SERMON IV.

THE USES OF THE LAW.

Wherefore then serveth the law?—GALATIANS iii. 19.

MY brethren, the great doctrines of grace were precious doctrines with the apostle Paul. Although he was a man of blameless morality, of ardent piety, of quenchless and untiring zeal; although he was a man who had done and suffered more in the cause of his divine Master than any other man, probably, that ever lived, yet, when he comes to speak of his acceptance with his Maker, he makes no

mention of any of these things. "Christ is all his hope, and grace is all his song." He relies upon the finished righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, imputed to him, and received by faith alone. This doctrine, so humbling to the pride of the human heart, the apostle gloried in; and, on more occasions than one, he enters into an argument to show how utterly impossible it is for the sinner to obtain justification with God in any other way. In the third chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, he enters fully upon the subject, and winds up in this way: "Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." In the next chapter he presents the same idea, but in language still stronger and more decisive: "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Presenting the doctrine of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, and that alone, in a manner so clear and strong, the apostle was aware that some might charge him with Antinomian sentiments; as if he undervalued the law; as if he would set it aside as a dead letter, and thus encourage men to continue in sin, that grace might abound. How does he meet this cavil? How does he repel this charge? With holy indignation! "Do we then make void the law through faith?" says he: "God forbid! yea,

we establish the law." He insists upon it that the doctrine of justification by faith in the Redeemer, and by that alone, is a wholesome doctrine, has no licentious tendency whatever, but is the very doctrine which honours the law, and secures its best obedience.

And now, going in the wake of the apostle, I wish, before laying before you the uses of the law, to give a bird's-eye view of the doctrine of justification. In the matter of the sinner's acceptance with God, we firmly believe that good works form no part whatever—"the death of Christ must still remain sufficient and alone." If the sinner were a thousand times better than he is, that would be no ground of hope; if he were a thousand times worse than he is, that need be no ground of despair; for, mark, if he were a thousand times better than he is, he never could be saved without coming to Christ; if a thousand times worse than he is, coming to Christ, in the overflowings of a penitent and believing heart, he would, immediately, be encircled in the arms of God's parental and forgiving love. So that, (and I repeat it,) in the matter of the sinner's acceptance with God, (so far as merit in the sinner is concerned,) good works form no part whatever. "The death of Christ must still remain sufficient and alone." Do any charge me with Antinomian sentiments, and say, "O, sir, is not that a dangerous doctrine?" I repel

the charge, as the apostle did, with holy indignation. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid! Yea, we establish the law; we insist upon it, that the doctrine of justification, by the righteousness of Christ, and that alone, is most wholesome, and is the very doctrine which prompts to the best obedience. Do you ask, how? I answer in this way:—The sinner is awakened. Finding himself under the curse of God's righteous law, he is alarmed, and goes about to make satisfaction, to establish his own righteousness; in other words, he tries to save himself. After many efforts, finding no relief in that way, he comes to the conviction that he is indeed a poor, lost, ruined sinner; and when he is ready to give up, and thinks that there is no hope for him, then Christ is revealed in his heart, the hope of glory; the effect is, Christ becomes precious!—love becomes the ruling passion of the soul; and we all know, that love will make us do what nothing else possibly can. Do we then make void the law, through faith? God forbid! Yea, we establish the law. But some one may then say, "If justification cannot come by the law, wherefore then serveth the law?" Should I say that food cannot clothe us, do I say that food is of no use? Should I say that clothing cannot feed us, am I crying down the use of clothing? Certainly not. Everything is good in its own

place, and for its own use. Even so in the case before us. Faith serves to justify the soul before God, and good works serve to justify faith before men. In other words, one is the fruit-bearing tree; the other the fruit itself, which this good tree bears. Having given this brief bird's-eye view of the doctrine of justification, I proceed next to lay before you some of the most important uses of the law.

1. One important use of the law is to declare the sovereignty of God—to assert his supreme and everlasting dominion over us. Some minute philosophers, after descanting upon the amplitude and wonders of creation, tell us, that “man is but an atom of an atom world,” and therefore too insignificant to be noticed by the great God; but, let it be remembered, that there is, so to speak, a twofold universe; a universe of worlds and systems, and also a universe of minute existences—animalcules, for example, so exceedingly minute, that it would require a thousand of them to occupy the space of a grain of sand! And now, if, in comparison with the one universe, man dwindles into insignificance and becomes “an atom of an atom world;” in comparison with the other universe, man rises into vast importance—becomes a giant, a colossus, a world, a universe in himself, and therefore worthy of notice—the minute philosopher himself being judge. But this matter apart: the law itself proves, that,

however insignificant man is, in comparison with the immensity of the works of God, he is deemed of sufficient importance to be made the subject of divine legislation. The very existence of the law proves this; whilst its compass makes known God's determination to embrace all men, and all their actions; and its spirituality proves the purpose of God to lay his hand upon the very springs of action. And, to crown the whole, the penalty of the law shows the divine determination to notice every violation of the law, and to suffer it in no case to be trampled upon with impunity. My brethren, it is a good thing to have the sceptre of the God of heaven over us; but a still better thing, if possible, to know that this sceptre is over us. Now this law is a standing memorial of the fact: it declares that God is our sovereign; that we are recognized as the subjects of his moral government; and that we should act accordingly. Certainly this is a very important and most excellent use of the law.

2. A second and very important use of the law, is to furnish a perfect code of moral precepts; and that it is perfect, we have demonstrated, as we think, in our first discourse.* But the evidence thereof may also be seen in the very remarkable fact, that no one, so far as

* See page 14.

I know, has ever suggested an amendment. Our representatives in Congress, embracing the collected wisdom of the nation, are annually engaged in making laws, and amending and repealing them, and making new laws: but here we have a code of laws given more than three thousand years ago, and, if I mistake not, no enlightened and virtuous man has ever desired their amendment or repeal. In this point of view, then, the moral law as given in the Bible, is of great use, of immense value.

3. Another important use of the law is to curb the wicked—to hold them in check. The prohibitions of the law are as so many mountain barriers placed in the way of the transgressor; and when these barriers are passed, then comes the penalty of the law, like some mighty angel standing in the path of the transgressor, with a drawn sword in his hand, threatening to cleave him down, and thundering in his ear at every step the much needed warning—"Stand in awe, and sin not!" But,

4. The law is of use to convince the sinner that he is a sinner, a great sinner, lost, ruined, and undone. "By the law," says the apostle, "is the knowledge of sin." It may be considered as a mirror, in which the sinner sees the defects and obliquities of his own moral character; or, as a kind of balance, in which sinners and their actions are weighed and

found wanting. Now, let any candid man take the ten commandments—let him read them all over carefully; and, reviewing his life, let him say, if he can, “All these commandments I have strictly kept, from my youth up; I have broken not one.” No, he cannot, but must rather say, with Job—“If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: If I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.” But the law is of use, not only to convince the sinner that he is a sinner, but that he is a great sinner; that his sins are very numerous, and of great magnitude; only let him take the law of the ten commandments, and read it, in connection with our Saviour’s sermon upon the mount, expounding its extent and spirituality; and, if I mistake not, he will have such views of himself as he never had before. Sins of omission, and sins of commission; sins of thought, of word, and of deed, how very many! And, O! if the Spirit of God should pour light upon the mind of the sinner, and set home the claims of the law upon his conscience with divine power, methinks he will better understand the language of Eliphaz to Job: “Is not thy wickedness great, and thine iniquities infinite?”—“I was alive without the law, once,” says the apostle, “but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” Time was, when he thought himself no great sinner; “his hopes

of heaven were firm and bright," but when the commandment came, with a convincing power and light, his views were changed, and he had to confess himself to be a great sinner, yea, even the chief of sinners. The language of the poet, I presume, many in this assembly can well understand :

"My sins appeared but small before,
Till terribly I saw
How perfect, holy, just, and pure,
Was thine eternal law.
Then felt my soul the heavy load,
My sins revived again;
I had provoked a dreadful God,
And all my hopes were slain!"

But the law is of use to convince the sinner that he is a great sinner, by its dreadful penalty. In human legislation, it is deemed a matter of vital importance, to proportion, as far as possible, the punishment to the offence; and if this principle be flagrantly violated, all cry out against the law. For example: suppose the legislature of this State should make a law of this kind, that whoever shall be convicted of murder in the first degree, shall be fined one dollar, and imprisoned one hour. Would not all cry out against that law?—and why? Because the proportion between the punishment and the offence is not maintained. What! the penalty for wilful murder only one dollar fine, and one hour imprisonment! This will

never do! Well, suppose, at the next session of the legislature this law should be repealed, and a law of this kind enacted:—If a person shall defraud another to the amount of five dollars, upon conviction thereof, he shall suffer death, without benefit of clergy? Would not all intelligent persons throughout the State cry out against this law also?—and why? For the same reason as in the other case—the principle of proportioning the punishment to the offence is not regarded. Now, if this principle be important in human governments, why may it not be in the divine? The Ruler of the universe must certainly fully understand this matter, and be aware of its immense importance. And now, what is the penalty of the divine law? “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” “Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that sinneth.” “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them.” That is, according to the Scriptures, every sin deserves the wrath and curse of God, both in this life and that which is to come; or, in other words, everlasting perdition is the penalty of God’s violated law. This, my brethren, is an awful penalty. Now, then, if the sinner be not a great sinner, one of two things must be true—either that God lacks understanding, or, he is a malignant being! Certainly he does not lack un-

derstanding, for he is the "Only Wise God." He cannot lack understanding, for is he not the unoriginated Source of all intelligence? No! no! his understanding is infinite. He knows precisely the true demerit of sin, and he knows perfectly how to proportion the punishment to the offence; this must be admitted by all: then, if the sinner still denies that he is a great sinner, he must come to this frightful and blasphemous conclusion, that God, knowing full well how to proportion the punishment to the offence, fixes the penalty vastly beyond what he knows to be just! O! my friends, this cannot be, for God is Love, and he has given the most affecting proof of his kind regards for man, by sending his only begotten and well-beloved Son to die for our sinful race. God, then, being infinitely wise, and knowing precisely what sin deserves—being infinitely good, and having no disposition to make the penalty too severe, it follows necessarily, that, whether the sinner is convinced of it or not, in the sight of God he is a great sinner, an awful sinner, a hell-deserving sinner!

There are several reasons why the sinner may not be sensible of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and consequently of his own demerit as a sinner. 1. He knows not the excellence of the law which he has violated. The more excellent a law is, and the more intimately con-

nected it may be with matters of vital importance, the greater is the crime of violating that law. To illustrate my meaning: In the world of nature, the principle of gravitation is a principle of vital importance, causing all worlds and things to maintain their proper stations, and move in beautiful and delightful harmony. Now, suppose a blow could be given to that principle of gravitation, deranging the harmony of all worlds, and causing worlds and systems to dash together in wild confusion; would not that blow, thus given, and thus operating, be a very serious matter? Now, let it be remembered, that what the principle of gravitation is in the natural world, the principle of love is in the moral world—that which binds everything in harmony with each other, and all to the throne of God; therefore, all the requirements of the law, being summed up in love, as the Saviour teaches, sin, which breaks the law, of course strikes a blow at this principle of moral harmony; and, O! in the frightful history of human depravity, and in the present sad condition of our fallen world, we have an exhibition of the nature of sin, showing that, of a truth, it is no light matter, but is an evil of unspeakable magnitude. It wars against love, and against the well-being and happiness of all the creatures which God has made.

Another reason why the sinner may not be

duly conscious of the fact, is this, that he does not reflect, as he should, upon the character of that Being against whom his sin is committed. It is not against a man, a worm like ourselves, nor an angel, but against the great God of heaven and earth, to whom also we are indebted for our existence, and every blessing, that he has sinned; as the Psalmist says, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest; and be clear when thou judgest." If a man strike a blow at another, it is a violation of law, and deserves punishment; if the person who was struck was a master, or a father, venerable by reason of silvery locks and hoary age, the offence is greater, and deserves a severer punishment. But suppose the person upon whom the blow was inflicted, to be a king, a lawful monarch upon his throne, in robes of royalty—certainly the offence would be still greater, and the punishment deserved still more condign: thus the criminality of the act and its punishment must be graduated by the character or the dignity of the person against whom the offence has been committed. Now, sin strikes a blow at the Eternal God! our Heavenly Father, our Divine Master, the Ancient of Days, and the alone Monarch of all worlds. Yes, sin strikes a blow at this great and glorious Being; pouring contempt upon all the perfections of his

character, and doing what it can to lay his sacred honours in the dust. Now, if the principle of graduation be correct, (and certainly it is,) then, God being an infinite being, sin against him is an offence of infinite magnitude, and deserving of infinite punishment.

But yet another reason why the sinner may not understand the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and his own demerit, is this—he does not think how much evil may flow from one sinful act. “Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!” A single spark of fire may be considered a small matter, but let it be struck in a magazine of gunpowder, or let it kindle upon a dwelling, in a large city, and it may extend, and extend, and extend, until the whole city is laid in ruins! Here is a lake, having a smooth surface; a stone is cast into that lake; ripples are formed, and their concentric circles spread, and spread, and spread, until, perchance, they sweep the farthest shore! Here are a thousand crystal pillars, of immense value, upon a level plain, all standing in a row. An impulse is given to the first, which throws it down; in falling, that pillar strikes a second, and that, in falling, strikes a third; and so on to the last—and lo! a thousand crystal pillars lie shattered upon the ground, all traced to the single impulse given to the first pillar! Here is a man, a father; in the presence of his little boy, he utters an oath; that little boy catches that oath

from his father's lips—he becomes profane—and, through all time profaneness is handed down, it may be, from generation to generation, until it leads, perchance, to the perdition of a hundred thousand souls! O! think of the frightful consequences of the first sin committed by the first human pair. One poet says, and very correctly,

“Our mother took the poisoned fruit,
And tainted all our blood.”

And another, graphically says,

“—— Her rash hand in evil hour,
Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she eat!
Earth felt the wound; and Nature, from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,
That all was lost!”

No man knows, or can know, all the bearings and ultimate effects of sin; for the consequences thereof, may not only flow down the long stream of time, but, through the wide ocean of eternity! The fact is, it is none but God who knows, or can know, what a dreadful evil sin is! In fixing the penalty of the law, he has given his estimate of it. This is his judgment, and we are sure his judgment is true. Of course, then, whether the sinner be sensible of it or not, he is a great sinner. O excellent use of the law, to convince the sinner that tremendous guilt lies upon his soul! This conviction

is wholesome; this conviction is necessary;—for, if not convinced of our sin, we shall never feel as we should our need of a Saviour. “The whole,” says the Saviour, “have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.” “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Be entreated then, my unconverted friends, not to brace yourselves up against conviction. Be willing to know the truth, however it may startle you, and humble you, and lay your soul in the dust;—for, thank God, “it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”—even the chief. But, to proceed. In speaking of the claims and penalties of the law, some may object to its severity, in several things. For example, when they hear the sentence denounced, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them;”—perceiving that the “moral man,” so called, if a sinner at all, is as truly brought under the curse of the law as the greatest transgressor, they think that this is not just. What! one single sin exposing the soul to the penalty of the law? Yes, certainly, in the very nature of the case, this must be so. Here is a man who has burned down the house of his neighbour. He is arrested, he is convicted of the crime of arson. What is the penalty for arson in this commonwealth? Is it imprisonment? or is it death? No matter

what it is, the person convicted of burning down one house, is as certainly exposed to the penalty, as if he had burned down a thousand. Now, if this principle is admitted to be correct in human law, why should it not also be deemed correct in the divine law? Besides, does not the apostle James say, "He that offendeth in one point, is guilty of all?" If one link in a chain be broken, the chain as certainly falls to the ground as if every link had been broken. I do not say that the pangs of the second death will be as great for one transgressor as for another; but it is certain, that the second death awaits every transgressor, according to the provisions of the law; for we repeat it, it is written, and it must stand for ever, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them."

Another objection is based upon the doctrine of everlasting punishment, which the law denounces. The point of the objection is this:—that a person should be everlastingly punished in the world to come, for the sins committed in this brief state of existence. "There is no proportion," says the objector, "between the time occupied in the commission of sin, and the duration of the punishment." And is there any reference to the time occupied in human law? Here is a man who draws a pistol, fires it, and, in one second of time, his enemy falls dead at his feet! He is ar-

rested—he is tried for wilful murder:—all the witnesses agree that he did fire the pistol, and did thus murder the man. Now, the lawyer rises to plead for his client at the bar—and some of these lawyers, we know, are very learned and ingenious—but did you ever hear a single lawyer bring forward an argument of this kind?—"May it please the court, my client stands indicted on a charge of murder; I admit that my client did murder the deceased, but I wish your honour and the gentlemen of the jury to notice, that it did not take my client twenty years to perpetrate the deed; nor ten—nor even one! It was the work of a second. I hope the court will perceive that the offence is a trifling one, and that your honour, without further delay, will direct the sheriff to dismiss the jury!" Did you ever hear of any lawyer, learned or not, make a speech of this kind? I suspect not. Well, the judge gives the charge. Did you ever hear a judge give a charge of this kind?—"Gentlemen of the jury, you have heard the testimony and all the pleadings in the present case; and now, it only remains for me to give you the charge. Gentlemen of the jury, two points will engage your attention. First—matter of fact. Secondly, matter of law. With regard to the first point—you have heard the testimony of the witnesses, and the case is ad-

mitted, even by the counsel for the prisoner, to be clear; he murdered the man, and now it only remains for me to instruct you, in the matter of the law. Gentlemen of the jury, you are to inquire, diligently, how long it took the prisoner at the bar to murder the deceased. If it took him twenty years, it is a great offence against the law, and calls for a heavy punishment. If it took him ten years, it is only half as great an offence, and deserves only half that punishment. If it took one year, it is only one-twentieth part as serious an offence; but if you find evidence to believe that the perpetration of the deed occupied no more than a second of time, it is a matter of no consequence at all, and you will clear the prisoner!"

Did you ever hear, my brethren, of any learned judge giving a charge of this kind? He had better not. It would be a rightful ground of impeachment. Human law lays no stress upon the time occupied in the violation of the law, the simple question is, touching the fact of violation:—that fact established, the penalty follows as a matter of course, whether the time occupied has been long or short. If this principle be correct in human law, why may it not also be correct in that law which is divine? But, farther: does not the law of the land also, in many cases, recognize and act

upon the principle of everlasting punishment? Here is a man convicted of murder, and he is sentenced to die. Do you ever see him at the ballot-box any more? Do you ever see him on the street, in the store, at the neighbour's house, or even at his own home any more? The other day he was a freeman, and invested with all the rights and privileges of a good citizen, but, by the law of the land, he is stripped of these rights and privileges, and stripped of them for ever. But take another case, the case of confinement for life in the penitentiary. The man is there: if he lives five years, he is there five years. If he lives ten years, he is there ten years. If he lives twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty years, he is there still, and never comes out. The idea is this: Human law was made for the body; it grasps the body of the offender, as it were, with an iron grasp, and never lets go so long as it can retain that grasp; that is, until the body dies. Even so, the divine law, made for the soul, grasps the soul, and will not let go, so long as it can retain its grasp; that is, until the soul dies: but the soul never dies, therefore the punishment is everlasting.

This is an argument which, I humbly conceive, cannot be set aside by the wit or ingenuity of any man, especially as it falls in with the solemn declaration of our blessed Saviour, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire

is not quenched." Another idea connected with the subject is this, that those who die in an unregenerate state go to the world of woe with the carnal mind, which is enmity against God. They will, according to the Scriptures, blaspheme the God of heaven, because of their pains, and repent not; that is, they will continue to sin; and if they continue to sin, may not God continue to punish them? Remember the closing words of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew: "These" (the wicked) "shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Let none trifle with matters of such immense importance. Go, careless sinner, trifle with the forked lightning! Go, trifle with the sweeping whirlwind, and trifle with the raging pestilence! But trifle not, O trifle not with the interests of that immortal soul of yours, which must be saved or lost, happy or miserable, through all eternity!

But, as we have said, the law is of use to convince the sinner, not only that he is a sinner, and a very great sinner, but that he is also a sinner lost, ruined, and undone. The argument is this: The law demands perfect obedience. The penalty is death. The sinner has broken the law, and the law thunders out, "Satisfaction or death;" but the sinner can make no satisfaction. Repentance will not do. Will the merchant take tears in payment for

what is due him? or will repentance release the murderer, under sentence of death? Nor will reformation answer. If the debtor says to the merchant creditor, "If you will cancel my debt, I will get in your debt no more; I will turn over a new leaf, and will pay cash, in all time to come." Will that satisfy the merchant? Or, if the murderer condemned to die, should say to the judge who has pronounced the sentence, "I will commit murder no more;" will this satisfy the judge, or rather the law, of which he is but the organ? O no! if all debtors were released, and all criminals pardoned on these terms, the very foundations of society would be broken up, and the most important affairs of human life would be thrown into perfect confusion, and the consequences to the community would be most alarming. No, my brethren, sin is too dreadful an evil, too terrible in its tendencies, for God to treat it as a venial affair. For the good of the universe the law must speak this language—"Satisfaction or death." The sinner himself can make no satisfaction—then the sinner stands exposed to the penalty, like the culprit whose head is upon the block, and exposed to the axe of the executioner.

But this leads me to mention yet another use of the law, and one which I love to mention—it is this:—To convince the sinner that he needs a Saviour, and without an interest in

the atoning sacrifice of the great Redeemer, he must perish, without mercy and without hope! "The law," says the apostle, "is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." All its precepts and all its penalties—all its lightnings and all its thunders, have a direct and powerful tendency to cut the sinner off from all his self-righteous plans and self-righteous dependence, and to shut him up to the plan proposed in the gospel. It may be represented thus:—The law finds the sinner careless and secure in his sins; setting before the sinner its claims and penalties, it charges home guilt upon his soul. The sinner, waking up in alarm, promises repentance. "How can tears on earth wash out those sins written in heaven?" says the law. "Pay what thou owest! The soul that sinneth, it shall die!" "O spare me," cries the sinner, "I will not only repent of my sins, but I will reform. I will become a better man." "All in vain," says the law, "a better sacrifice is required; without the shedding of blood, there is no remission." "O, well," says the sinner, yet more alarmed, "if it must be so, I consent; I am willing to lay down my life as an atonement for my sins!" "Neither will this answer," says the law: "you have sinned against an infinite God, and divine justice demands an infinite atonement, or death. Thou canst not make this atonement; then prepare for death. Now hear your

sentence—‘Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them!’” O, dreadful! the sinner is condemned! is sentenced to eternal death! What is to be done? Let him cry for mercy! The law knows no mercy; stern and inexorable, it still rolls its thunders over the sinner’s soul, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.” And now all the sinner’s legal plans and legal hopes are fled, and fled for ever! Under the curse of God’s righteous law, he is sinking down—sinking down! Despair is gathering its terrors around him! and now he gives himself up for lost. But, hark! what sweet voice is that?—“Poor sinner! dying sinner! look from the borders of the pit to my recovering grace!”—“Is this thy voice, my Saviour! my loving, bleeding, dying Lord?” says the sinner. “Welcome, welcome, dear Redeemer! welcome to this heart of mine. O blessed Saviour, I take thee on thy terms, on any terms—

‘Here Lord I give myself away,
Tis all that I can do.’”

A stern master, as the story goes, had, by his repeated corrections, embittered the life of a poor slave. This poor slave sought comfort in religion, and found it. Laid upon a bed of death, he was very happy; ready to depart, and

to be with Christ, which was far better. At this moment his stern master stepped into his room, and stood near his dying bed. The dying slave perceived his master, and, with much emotion, grasped his master's hand, and brought it to his lips, and kissed it, saying, "Blessings upon this hand! Blessings upon this hand! This hand has saved my soul!" So, the sinner brought to Christ by the terrors of the law, may say, "Blessings upon the law! Blessings upon the law! It was stern and severe—it humbled me, it scourged me—it taught me that I was a sinner, a great sinner, a sinner lost, ruined, and undone—it made me feel my need of a Saviour—it was a school-master to bring me to Christ! Blessings upon the law! in this way it has saved my soul!" May the law do its office upon the heart of every sinner in this assembly this morning. Amen, and Amen!

SERMON V.

THE SINNER WEIGHED AND FOUND WANTING.

Tekel; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.—DANIEL v. 27.

AMIDST the darkness of heathenish ignorance and superstition, there have not been wanting plain and unequivocal evidences of a superintending and retributive Providence. Pharaoh was visited with memorable judgments for refusing to let the children of Israel go; and history informs us, that not only Belshazzar, (to whom the words of our text immediately apply,) but Antiochus Epiphanes, Galerius Maximus, and many others, were signally punished for their daring impiety. With regard to Belshazzar, he was a most dissolute monarch. Neglecting the affairs of his empire, he gave himself up to every excess of riot and debauchery: but the measure of his iniquity was now full. The period was at last arrived, when he should reckon with his God. On one of the national festivals, (supposed to be in honour of the golden image which had been set up by Nebuchadnezzar in the plains of Dura,) Belshazzar, the king, we are told, made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank

wine before the thousand; and, as if it were not enough that he should be a bacchanalian, he must needs add sacrilege to his intemperance. In the midst of his banquetings, he orders the golden vessels, which had been brought from Jerusalem, and placed in the temple of Belus, in Babylon—he orders, I say, these golden vessels to be brought into the banqueting-room, that his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink wine therein; thus turning to a profane use those vessels which had been consecrated, and set apart for the most sacred purposes. But there was a righteous God on high! There was an avenging angel just at hand!

Whilst Belshazzar was thus making an ostentatious parade of his wealth and grandeur; whilst he was drinking wine to gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone—in the midst of his revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries—in the very same hour of the night, came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick, upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace. The king saw it, and his countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him. The king saw it; and the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. The king saw it; and he cried out in alarm, and commanded to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. They came; they saw the writing, but they

could neither read it nor give the interpretation thereof. At length, by the advice of the queen mother, Daniel is called in. He read the writing; he gave the interpretation thereof. The words are few, but, indeed, they are full of terror!—"Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin:"—one of which we have selected for our consideration, "Tekel;" the meaning of which is—"Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." How dreadful the interpretation! Weighed in the balances, and found wanting! Alas! the trial is over; the decision is made; the sentence is gone forth; and all this announced in a manner so awful, so mysterious! Methinks it fell upon Belshazzar's ear as the sudden pealing thunder of a midnight storm! Hushed is the voice of mirth. Silent the song of revelry. The king and his courtiers, stupified with amazement, await in awful suspense the unseen but hovering judgment. For a moment the palace, which had been ringing with all manner of music, and the songs of mirth and revelry, is wrapt in the solitude and silence of the grave. Suddenly the silence is broken. The voice of alarm rings along the streets! It is the clashing of arms; the shrieks of the wounded—the groans of the dying, commingled with the thundering shouts of a victorious foe. The Lord God Almighty has opened to Cyrus the gates of brass, and has broken in sunder the bars of iron.

Babylon is taken! Soldiers crowd into the palace—Belshazzar is slain. O! disastrous night; where is Belshazzar's pomp and glory now? He was flushed with wine; but he is now icy cold in death! His royal robes, of gold and purple, are torn and rolled in his own blood. The impious monarch, in the midst of his bacchanalian debauch, is hurried to the bar of a thrice holy God. You tremble, perchance, at the doom which awaits him. O sinner! sinner! think of Belshazzar, and be wise. Are you shocked that I should insinuate a comparison between you and this wicked king? Remember you live in a gospel land; Belshazzar lived not in a gospel land. You have a Bible; Belshazzar had no blessed Bible. You have heard of the dear dying Saviour; Belshazzar never heard of this great Legate from the skies. And remember, you must be weighed in the balances too, and what though you be not found as much wanting as Belshazzar, if found wanting at all, in the great day of judgment, you will be for ever undone. My purpose is, not to sketch the character of this impious and idolatrous king—but to bring forward two classes of characters, and weigh them in the balances of the sanctuary. The first class of characters will embrace those who are heterodox in sentiment—those who embrace some fundamental error. The second class will consist of those who may be very orthodox or correct in senti-

ment, but are not so in practice. All these we purpose now to weigh in the balances of the sanctuary—and, let it be remembered, it does not need the forms and solemnities of the judgment day to ascertain any given character. Here, in the Scriptures before me, we have the balances of the sanctuary; and, if weighed in these, and found wanting, you may be as sure it is according to the decision of Heaven, as if it were actually announced, in a voice of thunder, from the throne of the Great Eternal! To the law and to the testimony, if it speak not according to this, it is because there is no light in them.

Class I. Those who are heterodox in sentiment, or those who embrace fundamental error.

1. The Atheist.—When we look abroad upon the heavens, and mark the garniture of the sky; when we contemplate our own bodies, so fearfully and wonderfully made; or when we look around, and observe the proofs of design on every hand, it really seems astonishing that any man in his senses should deny the existence of a God. But, as Spinoza, and Vaninni, and several members of the French Convention, advocated atheistical sentiments, we are disposed to believe that some persons, in the plenitude of their pride, may, peradventure, persuade themselves that there is no God. Now, on the supposition that there is such a character, let the atheist be weighed in the

balances of the sanctuary. What says the Psalmist? "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." Ps. xiv. 1. And this is condemnatory; but what is the language of Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans?—"The invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse." Now, if atheists in pagan lands are without excuse, certainly those who live amid the splendours of gospel day are also without excuse. The atheist, then, being weighed in the balances, is found wanting. But,

2. Let the Deist next be placed in the balances. There have been deists, no doubt, in every age; but this name was assumed by certain persons in France and Italy, who, although inclined to atheistical sentiments, chose rather to be called deists. Deists differ in many things, but agree in one particular, viz: in rejecting the sacred volume as a divine inspiration. Now, to the law and to the testimony. In Rev. xxii. 19, it is thus written—"If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city." But the deist, or infidel, takes away not only a part—he takes away the whole of God's blessed word. If this should meet the eye of an infidel, or deist, he will, no doubt, be

disposed to smile at my simplicity—that I should presume to weigh him in the balances of the sanctuary. He rejects these balances, which are suspended as it were from the throne of Almighty God, and he would be weighed in balances of his own—balances framed by his own deceitful heart, and poised aloft by Apollyon, the angel of the burning pit. Deluded mortal! How dost thou know that thy balances are correct? What angel whispered it in thine ear? To what high authority wilt thou appeal? Deluded mortal! I ask again, How dost thou know that thy balances are correct? Who stamped them? Now, these balances of the sanctuary are divinely stamped. They bear the stamp of prophecy; the stamp of miracles; the stamp of holiness;—they bear many a clear stamp divine. If the balances of the infidel be correct, how comes it to pass that the champion of infidelity* recanted when he was sick, and cried aloud in terror when he died? How comes it to pass that one in the hour of death said—“I am taking a leap into the dark;† and another cried out—“O, the insufferable pangs of hell and damnation.”‡ Ah! my readers, you have heard, it may be, of many an infidel recanting on a bed of death; did you ever hear of a Christian then recanting? You have heard, no doubt, of many an

* Voltaire.

† Hobbes.

‡ Francis Newport.

infidel, when he was about to die, sending for some Christian to comfort him. Did you ever hear of a single Christian, in such circumstances, sending for some infidel to comfort him. No, never! Infidels, and those associated with them, are frequently seen going on, right merrily, in the broad road, pointing the finger of scorn at pilgrims in the narrow way; but whence is it, that when the river of death heaves into sight, they are usually so desirous of taking a short cut, to pass over at the Christian's fording place? Why do they, generally, not like their own fording place? Ah! too many fearful things are there! Frequently despair is there! remorse is there! and heavy clouds of wrath! But, to the law and to the testimony—hear the language of the Saviour, and observe, it was uttered in his last interview with his disciples, just as he was about to ascend up into heaven—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Mark xvi. 15, 16. The case is settled. The deist, or infidel, dying in that state, dies without hope!

3. Let the Legalist be weighed next; and by the legalist, I mean the self-righteous man, he who, valuing himself on account of the supposed excellence of his own moral character, feels no need of a Saviour, and consequently, neglects

the great salvation. Doubtless there are some of this class in this assembly. Let the legalist then be placed in the balances. Now, "to the law and to the testimony." What has the legalist to weigh against the requirements of the law? Nothing, except it be a righteousness absolutely perfect; for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." And where is the man who has, strictly speaking, continued in all things written in the book of the law to do them? In other words, where is the individual who has never sinned? There is none upon the face of the earth, for the Bible says expressly, "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." And the apostle John says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." And again, in language yet more emphatic, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." The legalist, then, has no perfect righteousness of his own, and therefore has nothing to weigh against the requirements of the law. And what has he to weigh against the requirements of the gospel? Nothing, except it be the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ; but this, you will observe, on his own principles, he has nothing to do with. Then see how the case stands. The legalist, or self-righteous man, has nothing to weigh against

the requirements of the law; nor has he any thing to weigh against the requirements of the gospel. Alas! alas! self-righteous man, thou art in an evil case! "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting!"

4. Let the Universalist be next weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. The Universalist of the modern stamp believes that all, no matter how wicked they may have been, will go to heaven when they die. If so, why did the Saviour say, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "He that believeth not, shall be damned;" and, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." On the principles of the Universalist, these solemn declarations of the Saviour have no meaning at all; or, if they have, they mean the very opposite of what they express, even this—Whether ye repent or not, ye shall not perish; he that believeth not, shall not be damned; and, whether a man be born again, or not, he shall certainly see the kingdom of God; aye, shall certainly reach heaven—all Bible declarations to the contrary, notwithstanding. O! what awful trifling with the Scriptures have we here! But the Universalist may say: The change required takes place in death. Where is this doctrine taught in all the Bible? Point me out the chapter and the verse, if you can! Whilst nothing of that kind can be found in all the sacred volume, we find

it thus written, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Eccl. ix. 10. Again, "The night cometh, when no man can work." Again, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Rev. xxii. 11. And again, "The rich man also died and was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." Luke xvi. 23. But if these passages may, by wit and ingenuity, be set aside, there is one which certainly cannot, and I do think it must settle the matter with modern Universalists for ever. It is the language of the Saviour, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." We know that many do not receive Christ as the Messiah. We know that many do not believe in him at all. Now, says the Saviour, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins;" and he that dies in sin, of course must perish. But whilst there are many, very many other passages of Scripture, fatal to the doctrine of universal salvation, permit me to quote only two more. "The hour cometh," says the Saviour, "when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life,

and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation." John v. 29. The second passage is found in Genesis vi. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually; and God said, I will destroy man from the face of the earth: but Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Now, mark, God purposes to give an awful display of his wrath and indignation against the workers of iniquity, and, at the same time, to show his special regard for righteous Noah, who had found grace in his sight. And what does he do? Why, he stretches forth the hand of his omnipotence, breaks up the fountains of the great deep, opens the windows of heaven, sends a mighty flood of waters upon the earth, and sweeps the whole world of the ungodly *right up into heaven!* Every man that was upon the face of the earth is swept right up into heaven, except righteous Noah! and he, poor man, who had found grace in the eyes of the Lord, is left to toil and struggle, and suffer affliction here on earth; whilst the abominable ones, who were so wicked that God could not endure them on earth, are taken immediately to his bosom in heaven! Moreover, if the Universalist is right, the sexton, who puts the body down into the grave, called hell, is more to be feared than any other being in the universe.

See Luke xii. 5. Men and brethren, can you believe this? Certainly not! No man in his senses can believe it—then the case is settled; the Universalist is weighed in the balances, and found wanting; and if he should have no better foundation than he now has, as sure as there is a God in heaven, he will perish, and perish for ever! With regard to the Universalists of former times, otherwise called hell-redemptionists, the doctrine embraced is so completely at war with the doctrine of grace, and the whole tenor of the sacred volume, that the theory of universal salvation on that plan is now exploded; and being given up pretty much, even by its own former advocates, we need only remind you of the great gulf, which, according to the Saviour, is fixed between heaven and hell, which is never to be passed; and also remind you of the language of the Saviour in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, and which describes the winding-up scene of the great judgment-day: “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.” Having weighed in the balances of the sanctuary those who embrace fundamental error, we proceed to bring forward

Class II. This embraces those who may be very correct in sentiment, but are not so in practice. And,

1. Let the unrighteous be weighed in the

balances of the sanctuary; and by the unrighteous man, I mean the fraudulent man, the dishonest man, the intemperate man, the gambler, the swindler, the man of cruelty and extortion; in short, all who openly and daringly trample upon the golden precept, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." O, what a long, long list of crimes has the unrighteous man to answer for! crimes various and multiform—against God—against man—against his own. He has not only neglected the lesser duties of social life, but the greater matters of the law. Against such, the blessed Saviour denounces an awful woe; but the apostle Paul, in few words, settles the matter for ever: "Know ye not," says he, "that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." O, unrighteous man! openly wicked man! "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting."

2. Let the worldling next be placed in the balances. Some are worldlings, who would not, and should not, be esteemed unrighteous men, in the common acceptation of that term. By the worldling, I simply mean the person who loves the world, who loves it supremely; who

is ready to say, "Give me riches, honours, pleasures; give me, moreover, health, friends, and long life, and this world will do for me, I desire no better."

And now, let us view the worldling in his threefold character—as a man of fashion, a man of pleasure, and a man of business. Is he a man of fashion? He loves the praise of men more than the praise of God, the very character condemned in the sacred volume. (John xii. 43.) Is he a man of pleasure? Then, according to the prophet, he has committed two evils: "He has forsaken his Maker, the Fountain of living waters, and has hewn out unto himself broken cisterns, which can hold no water." But is he a man of business? Mark this worldling! The morning dawns; he rises, refreshed and invigorated by the slumbers of the night; but he offers no thanksgivings to God, for the repose and protection of the night. He leaves his chamber without prayer. And now he goes forth to the pursuits of the day. Still mark that worldling! His head, his heart, his soul, all are fastened upon the things of this world. He has no interval of serious thought; never once does he say, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" And now the shades of evening prevail; he returns to his dwelling, and is there greeted by an affectionate wife, and sweet, rosy, lovely children. Yes, the worldling, it may be, is in the midst of domestic comforts,

one would think, enough to melt a heart of rock, enough to warm his whole soul into gratitude and love. But he thinks not of his heavenly Benefactor; never once says, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Alas! he suffers the mercies of Heaven to lie forgotten in unthankfulness, and without praises die!" He is the head of a family; he has servants, and he has children, and it is his duty to set before them a good and pious example—his bounden duty "to lure to brighter worlds, and lead the way;" but he neglects his duty. Alas! the morning and the evening sun shines upon a prayerless household. He lives as if there was no God in the heavens to inspect his conduct; as if there was no judgment bar, at which he must one day appear! The fact is, although he may not think so, he is a practical atheist. He loves the world, loves it supremely; the world is his portion, his home, his all! Now, what says the Bible? "Love not the world, neither the things of the world; for, if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." O worldling, worldling, listen to me! Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting! And now, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" O think upon this. If any man ever gained the world, that man was Alexander the Great. And now, suppose, after all, that he died in sin, and

is now in the world of woe, what does it all, this moment, avail him? Come along, ye worldlings, come along with me, and let us, so to speak, go to the borders of the pit, and call up the shade of Alexander the Great from the vasty deep of hell.—Where is Alexander the Great? Let him now appear! Methinks there I see him—but how changed! Is this Alexander the Great? I see no glittering crown upon his head! no royal robes invest his form!—his hand, too, it grasps no sceptre! and his mighty generals, where are they? I see them not! Is this Alexander the Great? O that sepulchral groan! that unearthly sound, that comes rattling upon my ear:—"Call me not Alexander *the great*, call me Alexander *the lost*!" Unhappy shade! and art thou indeed lost, and lost for ever? "O, Alexander the Great, what wouldst thou now give in exchange for thy soul?" Another sepulchral groan, another unearthly sound!—"Give! I would give all the kingdoms I ever conquered—I would give all the sceptres I ever grasped! all the laurels I ever won!—I would give the world—ten thousand worlds, to come out of this pit of despair!" But hark! that rush of agony, that shriek of despair! The lost spirit, in hell, is sinking down, deeper, and deeper still! O worldling, worldling, think! Remember, you are now weighed in the balances, and found wanting; and, I repeat the solemn interrogatory of the

Saviour, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" O think upon this, before it be too late!

3. Let the profane swearer next be placed in the balances. Because of swearing, says the prophet, the land mourneth. There were profane swearers in his day; and alas! there are but too many in our times; and, weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, nothing can be plainer than that they are found wanting; for the Psalmist says, "Thine enemies, O God, take thy name in vain." And what is the language of the eternal God himself? "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." This sin indicates peculiar hardihood; as it is so expressly forbidden; and, what makes the matter worse, it is a kind of a gratuitous sin, being committed without any adequate temptation. And this reminds me of the remark of an old writer, quaint, it is true, but very forcible. "The devil," says he, "sometimes turns fisherman, and when he fishes for ordinary sinners, he is willing to go to some expense; he baits his hook with the riches of the world; the honours of the world; and the pleasures of the world; but, when he fishes for profane swearers, he throws them the naked hook! and they bite at the naked hook!—cheap even in the devil's account." Of a truth, profane swearing

is a dreadful sin, and seems, perhaps more than any other, to be the bubbling up of sheer depravity. Thank God, some are, in mercy, made to see it, and repent before it is too late. I recollect a case; it interested me much at the time, and I think I shall never forget it. During a protracted meeting in a certain town in Kentucky, a gentleman of some considerable note, called upon me at my lodgings. He wished to connect himself with the church, on the following Sabbath. He had been remarkably profane, but the Lord had been merciful to him, and he was now, as he hoped, a converted man. The case was this. He once had a lovely boy, an only son; this beloved child gave evidence of early piety. When perhaps not more than nine years of age, he was laid upon a sick and dying bed. He talked sweetly about Jesus, and much about heaven. On one occasion, when near his end, he called his father to his bedside, and, with great respect and affection, said, "Papa, I wish to make one request of you before I die." "What is it, my darling?" said the weeping father, bending over his beloved and now dying child. "O my dear son, your father is willing to do anything in the world for you; what do you wish me to do?" "Papa," said the dying child, "dear papa, *if you please, don't swear any more.*" The father, as he narrated the affecting incident, wept. Tears rolled down his cheeks.

"O sir," said he to me, "I never had anything to come with such power to my soul before—the language of my dying boy, 'Papa, dear papa, *if you please, don't swear any more,*' Sir, it was blessed to my poor soul." I need only add, that the next day I saw that man seated at the table of the Lord; and may we not suppose that when he comes to die, his cherub boy will hover over his dying bed, and be the first to welcome his happy spirit home to glory and to God! And now, if there be a single profane swearer present, let me say to him, as that dear dying child did to the father whom he loved, "*If you please, don't swear any more!*"

4. Let the hollow-hearted professor of religion next be placed in the balances. Strange as it may appear, Voltaire took the sacrament of the Lord's supper! Yes, that mouth of his, which uttered blasphemies against the Son of God—which taught treason against the divine and immaculate Jesus—that mouth received the memorials of a Saviour's dying love. Can such a solemn farce as this please a holy God? "Nay, verily, be not deceived, God is not mocked, whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." No matter what may be the profession or outward show, if the heart be not sincere and right in the sight of God, it is all as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Even if there be no wilful hypocrisy, or out-

rageous blasphemy, as in the case of Voltaire, a mere profession of religion can avail nothing, for "a solemn sound upon a thoughtless tongue" is a poor thing, and

"God abhors the sacrifice
Where not the heart is found."

Ah! my brethren, believe me, sacramental wine can never wash away the sins of the soul; nor can baptismal water cool the tongue of the falsehearted professor of religion in hell, tormented in penal flames! Professor of religion, remember the parable of the ten virgins! It is quite possible to have the lamp of profession without the oil of grace: the form, without the power of godliness. And, O, remember, peculiarly deep and dreadful must be the damnation of those who fall from the heights of Zion into the flames of hell! Methinks, through all eternity the thoughts of the sacramental board will haunt them; and, most terrible will it be to see those who once sat down with them at the table of the Lord, now in heaven, whilst they themselves are cast out! O, then, let all who are in communion with the church, now examine themselves, whether they be in the faith; remembering the words of the apostle, "Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Let all who are professors of religion, dig deep and lay a good foundation, for, according to the Scrip-

tures, the mere profession of religion, without the root of the matter, will not save the soul. The hollow-hearted professor of religion, then, having the name without the thing named, the form without the power of godliness, is weighed and found wanting.

And now, as I wish to benefit every soul present, and as some may think the preacher has not reached their case, as they do not acknowledge themselves to belong exactly to any of the characters specified, permit me to put in the balances of the sanctuary one character more, and sure I am, it will embrace all who are not on their way to heaven.

5. The unrenewed, no matter who they are, or what they are, in other respects, they too are certainly wanting: for, mark! if unrenewed, they have never repented of their sins; and what says the Scriptures? "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." If unrenewed, they have not believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. And what says the Bible? "He that believeth not, shall be damned." And again, "If unrenewed, they have not been born again." And what says the glorious Son of God? "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." No matter, then, my dear friends, who or what you may be, I tell you the truth in Christ Jesus, I lie not, if you have not been renewed in the temper and disposition of your souls—in other words, if you have not

experienced a change of heart, and become a new creature in Christ Jesus, you are still in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, and dying in that state, will certainly be lost. I have noticed that in every community there are persons who seem to be near the kingdom, but are not in it. They are amiable; they are interesting; they have some fine traits of character; but they are not converted. They remind us of what is said of Naaman. "Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable; moreover, he was a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper." So, these persons have many things to recommend them to the respect and affection of those around, but, alas! they are strangers to God's converting grace. Mark that venerable man! his locks are silvery with age; benignity is seated upon his brow; humanity lights up his faded countenance:—he has a purse for the needy, a shelter for the houseless, and a heart to sympathize with the sons and daughters of affliction. Perhaps, too, the patriot's flame still burns in his aged bosom; but is this all? Alas! his knees have never been bent in humble prostration at the mercy-seat! His hands have never been lifted up, in humble supplication, at the throne of heavenly grace! Whilst the snows of fifty, sixty, seventy winters have been bleaching his locks, his heart has been

cold, fast bound up in the ice of morality. What a pity that such a venerable man should, in the day of judgment, be found wanting. There goes an interesting young man! He has the flush of youth, joined with the discretion of riper years. He is admired and caressed, and deservedly, too, for he has an affectionate heart, a noble and a generous spirit! He is no debauchee; he is regular in all his hours, temperate in all his indulgences; no profane expressions pollute his lips; the world can see no stain in his moral character. He is the champion of morality, and even the advocate of religion. But is this all? Alas! he has entered the vestibule, but he has not entered the temple of religion. He has found many pearls, precious pearls, too, but not the "one pearl of great price." He has many things to recommend him, like the young man in the gospel, but, like the same young man, he lacks the one thing needful; and lacking this, he lacks the key to heaven. And see, too, that interesting young female! her temper is sweet, her manners are pleasing, her person is lovely; fair as the first rose that bloomed in Paradise, and her admirers say she has

"Grace in her steps; heaven in her eye;
In all her gestures, dignity and love."

She is her mother's rose, her father's pride, and the life of the circle in which she moves; but

is this all? Alas, she is no Mary!—has not chosen that good part which should not be taken from her—her heart is upon the world—she is a “lover of pleasures more than a lover of God.” Like the interesting young man just mentioned, she has entered the vestibule, but not the temple of religion; has found many pearls, but not the “one pearl of great price”—has many things to recommend her; but, like that amiable young man, (who, perchance, may be her brother,) she, too, lacks the one thing needful; and, lacking this, she lacks the key to heaven! O who will not weep when such persons, who seem to be so near the kingdom, refuse to come to Christ, and perish in their sins! But some persons may think it would be unjust in God to punish such innocent persons, and not right to send such “good-hearted” ones to the world of wo; but, let it be remembered, the Bible recognizes no innocence on earth, but that which consists in the forgiveness of sins; and no good-heartedness on earth, but that which consists in the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. The fact is, according to the Scriptures, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; and hence it is written: “Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” And it is true of all, “Except a man be born

again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." All then, who are unrenewed, are in a state of wrath and condemnation. Weighed in the balances, they are found wanting.

And now, my dear brethren, in closing, permit me to remark: I have brought forward several classes of characters, and weighed them in the balances of the sanctuary. Have I sketched the characters correctly? Have I weighed them with an even hand? Have any of you, my dear hearers, been weighed and found wanting? O, this is a serious matter! should the visible fingers of an invisible angel now write *tekel* over against you, upon the plaster of the wall, would not strange alarm seize upon you? Would you not, like Belshazzar, cry out in terror? And now tell me, O ye careless, Christless souls! tell me, what matters it, whether the visible fingers of an invisible angel write *tekel* on the wall against you, or the finger of inspiration write it here, in this volume, as with a sunbeam? You, then, who have been weighed, and found wanting, tell me, do you not believe that you must die? and dying, do you not believe that you must go to the judgment bar?—and, going to the judgment bar, do you not believe that you must be judged out of the things written in the sacred volume? And does not this book now condemn you? and if so, believe me, there is nothing wanting, this moment, to fix your

unhappy doom, but for God to fix your present character. And this he may do in one moment, quick as lightning, and terrible as the last trump! O, should the sun now be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood; should the stars now fall from the heavens, and the powers of the heavens be shaken; should the archangel's trump, louder than ten thousand thunders, and more awful than the hoarse crash of falling worlds, now wake up the slumbering dead! O, should you now see the Judge descending, the throne erected, the books opened, the balances, in which souls and their actions are to be weighed, poised aloft, and your souls about to be weighed—would you not tremble? Conscious that you are wanting, would not overwhelming horrors seize upon your soul? O, then, what a mercy that you did not die last night! or when you were last sick! O what a mercy that you are not now in eternity—your character fixed, your doom sealed for ever! What a mercy that you are still in the land of the living—still in a state of probation, and still under hope of heavenly grace! And now, what is to be done? Fly to Christ. Take refuge in his arms; for, sprinkled with his atoning blood, and found in him, you are safe. His blood cleanseth from all sin; and, arrayed in his righteousness, your souls shall find acceptance with God, and be secure amid all the thunderings and lightnings, and terrors

of the judgment day! O, sinner, fly to Christ. He is your only hope; and fly, without delay. Death may be near! Eternity may be just at the door! and, therefore, what thou doest, do quickly!

“Sinner, perhaps this very day,
Thy last accepted time may be;
O shouldst thou grieve Him now away,
Then hope may never beam on thee!”

SERMON VI.

THE CHARACTER AND REWARD OF THE EARTHLY MINDED.

Shame shall be the promotion of fools.—Prov. iii. 35.

THE Proverbs of Solomon are full of instruction; the language may sometimes appear harsh and abrupt, but the meaning is so much the more striking and impressive. This is the case with the passage at present under consideration. “Shame shall be the promotion of fools.” Here, you will observe, the wise man calls persons of a certain description fools; and let it be remembered, he did not mean those void of reason, who are fools in a natural sense; but those, who, in matters of religion, act as if

they were void of reason, and therefore may be called fools in a scriptural sense. The main difference between the one and the other seems to be this: The one acts in opposition to sound reason, through lack of a good understanding; the other, through lack of a right disposition. It is no uncommon thing for persons of a certain description, proud of their own supposed wisdom, to look rather contemptuously upon the people of God, and to esteem them as poor, weak-minded, deluded ones; and, sometimes, they even hesitate not to pronounce them fools. This day, I trust, the tables will be turned, and this reproach will be rolled away. Our purpose, at this time, is, by simple, common sense, and scriptural argument, to establish this proposition, that all unconverted persons—that all who, taken up with the things of this world, neglect the higher interests of eternity—that they are justly chargeable with folly, supreme folly. And this, I think, will appear in the two following particulars: first, in the choice which they make; and secondly, in the conduct which they pursue.

I. In the choice which they make.—We very frequently, and very correctly, form an idea of a person's wisdom, or folly, from what he chooses and most values. If, for example, a person should prefer an object of real and great value to one of little or no value; as far as the case goes, we form a favourable opinion of that

person's wisdom. But suppose the case be exactly the reverse. Suppose the man should prefer rags to robes, pebbles to jewels, the shadow to the substance, and counterfeit to genuine bank bills, would you pronounce him wise? I think not. And suppose, when this person is remonstrated with, in regard to the folly of his choice, he should continue, perseveringly, to make the same foolish choice, would you not be strongly tempted to pronounce him a fool? Now, why should not the principle hold just as well in spiritual as in temporal things? I think it does. And now, what do sinners choose? They make many a foolish choice; I will state a few by way of specimen.

First.—The sinner prefers the favour of man to the favour of God. That he does so is manifest, because, whilst he is tremblingly alive to his character, as it stands in the eyes of his fellow creatures, he usually cares very little how his character stands in the eyes of his Maker. It is well known that the sinner will go to much greater lengths to please man than to please God. Nay, he will frequently do what he knows full well is displeasing to God, and that for the express purpose of securing the favour of a fellow creature! Now, what does this prove? Most assuredly, that he sets a greater value upon the favour of man than upon the favour of God. And now, which is worth the most? With regard to the favour of

man, if of the right kind, certainly it is of some value; and I am free to say with the poet, "Poor is the friendless master of a world!" But after all, it is well known that the favour of man is oftentimes deceitful. O how frequently do we find that they of whose favour and friendship we thought ourselves perfectly sure, strangely cool off! We cannot imagine what has wrought the change, but with regard to the fact, that they are no longer our friends, that is but too clear; and, in the moment of excitement, we are ready to say, in the language of Scripture, "Cursed is the man that putteth his trust in man." But suppose this friend is a fast and faithful friend, we may be in a thousand different circumstances in which his friendship could avail us nothing. We may be laid upon a bed of sickness and languishing, and he know nothing at all about the matter. He may be far distant; mountains may tower, or oceans roll between us; or, say he is near at hand, standing at our side, and witnessing our distress; his tears may trickle down his cheeks, and all the tenderest sympathies of his heart may be excited; nay, he may even be willing to share our sorrows with us, but in spite of all his flowing tears, and the tender sympathies of his affectionate heart, we suffer, we agonize, we die, and there is only a new display of the impotency of human friendship. Such is the favour of man, fre-

quently fickle, and not to be relied upon; and even when of the best stamp, oftentimes of no substantial value; and yet, the sinner prefers the favour of man—to what? Angels in heaven, would ye believe it?—the sinner prefers the favour of man to the favour of God! I have told you what the favour of man is worth; and now, what is the value of the favour of God? O ye children of the heavenly King! ye precious sons and daughters of Zion, what do you say? I am sure the language of the Psalmist is your language, “Thy favour, O God, is life; thy loving kindness is better than life.” Yes, if I should pour down at your feet all the silver and the gold in the world, and offer that in exchange for the favour of God, would you take it? Would you not rather be ready to say, “Go and offer a monarch a bubble for his crown, and if he accepts, yet will not I.” The favour of God! Go and ask that young convert, who, for the first time in his life, has tasted that the Lord is good and gracious—that young convert whose countenance is dressed in smiles, and whose heart is now filled with a peace and joy unknown before—ask that young convert what he thinks of the favour of God. “O!” says he, “I never knew what real happiness was until I had a sweet sense of God’s forgiving love. Truly his favour is life, and his loving kindness better than life.” The favour of God!

Go and ask that dying Christian, just on the wing for glory—that dying Christian, just uttering those beautiful lines of Watts,

“Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are”—

Go and ask that dying Christian what he thinks of the favour of God. “The favour of God!” he replies. “O it is everything now to me. It is that which gives me now more comfort than tongue can express; it is that which softens my dying bed, and strews it all over with the roses of paradise!—it is that which brightens the dark scenery of the grave, and now raises me quite above the fear of death. O, it is infinitely more valuable to me now than ten thousand thousand worlds!” The favour of God!—Go through yonder pearly gates, and ask those bright and happy spirits who, robed and crowned, are now circling the throne, rejoicing in heaven. Go and ask them what the favour of God is worth to them. Methinks, with one voice, they would say: “It is the favour of God which makes us happy here. It is the favour of God which rolls a tide of rapture all over this eternal world of joy. It is the favour of God which makes heaven—heaven indeed to our souls!” Yes, my brethren, believe me, if the favour of God were withdrawn, angels themselves would be sad; the spirits of the just would be wrapt

in gloom, and the dwellings of the blessed would cease to charm. The favour of God! O! it is everything which men on earth, or angels in heaven can desire; and yet, the sinner in his wisdom prefers the favour of man to the favour of God! That is, he prefers the rags to the robes, the pebbles to the jewels, and the shadow to the substance! Is the sinner a wise man? Judge ye!

The second foolish choice which the sinner makes is this:—He prefers the interests of the body to the interests of the soul. That he does this is evident, because with him the body is the favourite. It is fed, it is clothed, it is tenderly cherished; and when sick, O then no pains, no expense is spared to restore it to health: but the soul, alas! with the sinner it is like a poor, motherless child, sadly neglected. It may be sick, nigh unto death, even the bitter pangs of the second and everlasting death, and yet it excites no interest; no provision is made for its comfort, nor even for its safety! Yes, whilst the sinner is so careful of his body, he really treats his soul as if it were a thing of no value. Now, let us compare one with the other—what is the body, and what is the soul? What is the body? It is of the earth, earthy. What is the soul? The breath of the Almighty! What is the body? It is allied to the beasts that perish. What is the soul? Allied to Him that liveth for ever and ever. Whilst the body is confined to

a small spot of earth, the soul ranges through the vast fields of creation, examines the beauty of the various parts, the amazing grandeur of the mighty whole. Rising above all worlds, the soul of man approaches the throne of Him whom the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain; contemplates his eternal power and Godhead, and all the high, and all the lofty things which belong to the Divine nature. Standing, as it were, by the throne of the great Creator, it looks back to the period when as yet no sun had lighted up the heavens; not a star had as yet glittered upon "the mantle of unessential night." Spreading its airy wings, it shoots forward into futurity, and, outstripping the roll of ten thousand, thousand ages, it there hovers over the vast, the boundless ocean of eternity; then climbing the immortal heights of the New Jerusalem, it revels in all the joys of the paradise of God; or, cast down to fiery deeps, and endless night, it converses with groans unpitied, unrespited ages of hopeless end. The body and the soul compared together! O, tell me, what is the body? "Fragile, frail as vegetation's tender leaf, or, as the passing meteor, brief! When long this miserable frame shall have vanished from life's busy scene, that sun shall flame, those orbs shall roll, as though this dust had never been!" What is the soul? "Immortal mind! by grovelling matter unconfined! the same when states and empires

change! When suns have waned, and worlds sublime their final revolutions told, the soul shall flourish over time as though such orbs had never rolled!" And yet, the sinner prefers the interests of the body to the interests of the soul. Is the sinner a wise man? Is he not a fool? I do not say that he is; I lay the argument before you; you have an understanding as well as the speaker; judge ye!

The third foolish choice of the sinner is this: he prefers temporal pleasure to eternal happiness; and in so doing, verily, he prefers the rags to the robes, the pebbles to the jewels, and the shadow to the substance. But that the sinner does make the choice which we affirm, can be known and read of all men, for his incessant cry is, "Who will show me any good?" And, although the objects of pursuit are exceedingly diversified, they are all of an earthly stamp. Some seek enjoyment in the riches of the world, some in the honours of the world, and some in the pleasures of the world. But now, tell me, my hearers, when did these things ever yet make man or woman happy? If riches could make one happy, I suppose that Haman ought to have been a very happy man; for he was so rich that he could offer king Ahasuerus no less than a thousand talents for the destruction of the Jews. But was Haman happy? You recollect, that on a certain occasion he called to-

gether his friends, and Zeresh, his wife, and told them of all the glory of his riches, and then added, "All these things avail me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai, the Jew, seated at the king's gate!" Here was a worm at the root of his happiness. If military honours could make one happy, I should suppose that Alexander the Great might have been a happy man; but he was not, for we are told he wept because he had not another world to conquer. If sensual gratifications could make one happy, I should think that Colonel Gardiner might certainly have been a happy man; for he was emphatically a man of pleasure, and was even called "The happy rake." But was he happy? O no, for he himself, after his conversion, testifies, that once when he was in the very midst of all the pleasurable indulgences of the world, a dog happening to come into the room, he actually sighed, and said to himself, "O that I were that dog!" Ah! my brethren, believe me, "the world can never give the bliss for which we sigh." And, in truth, we can no more expect to find perfect happiness in the world and the things thereof, than we may expect to find

"Mellow grapes beneath the icy pole!
Blooming roses on the cheek of death; or
Substance in a world of unsubstantial shades."

Solomon made a full experiment of the matter, for there was, it seems, no source of earthly en-

joyment to which he had not repaired in his pursuit after happiness; and yet in the winding up, he was constrained to say, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!"—Yes, my brethren, it is even so. In the possession of riches, in the possession of honours, in the possession of all the world calls good or great, "the heart distrustful, asks if this be joy?" But now, suppose some man of the world, in this assembly, should rise up and say, "Sir, you are mistaken, I am no Christian; I am a worldling, as you term it, and I am happy, perfectly happy; the angel Gabriel is not happier than I am." No man, I presume, can make such a remark; but if a single one of the human race now upon earth should be able to make such a remark, might we not reply: Be it so; but, sir, how long is this happiness going to last? "The ground of a certain rich man," says the Saviour, "brought forth plentifully; and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? and he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods; and I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up in store for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee."

You see then, my dear brethren, how the matter stands. No unconverted sinner can at

any given period say, I am now happy, perfectly happy! No, no! this happiness is always in prospect. Sometimes it may appear just at hand, but somehow or other it eludes the grasp; and even if the particular object desired be attained, how certain is there to be some disappointment about the matter; and if no disappointment, there is, as we have shown, no certainty of a single day's continuance. How often do laurels wither whilst yet upon the brow; and how often do bubbles burst while we are looking on? At the very time that Nebuchadnezzar considered himself in the plenitude of earthly glory; at the very time that he was walking in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon, surveying the magnificence of his capital, and saying in the pride of his heart, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built, for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty"—Mark! "While the words were in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven unto him, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; the kingdom is departed from thee." And so passes away all earthly joy. Such is the true character of all temporal pleasure, unsatisfying at the best, and transitory at that. O! how can one who has an immortal soul, and bound for eternity, content himself with a thing so unsubstantial and so evanescent? And yet the sinner values

it highly; yea, prefers temporal pleasure, such as it is, to eternal happiness. Eternal happiness! What is it? Were I a glorified spirit, I would know it; were I an adoring seraph, I would feel it; but were I a glorified spirit or an adoring seraph, I could never, no never, describe it: for, according to the apostle, "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him." Eternal happiness! "Beloved," says the apostle, "now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." O, think of the beatific vision of God and the Lamb; think of the sweet society of saints and angels; think of the perpetual exercise of all heavenly affections, the everlasting contemplation of all glorious objects! O think! No sin, no sorrow there! but joy, pure joy, seraphic joy, and joy for ever! O, think of the soul of the Christian falling asleep in Jesus; waked up from the bed of death by the music of the skies, and caught up to heaven on angel's wings, it comes into the presence of a smiling God; finds itself within the precincts of eternal day! Glory above, and glory beneath, and glory around, and glory within! The whole soul swimming as it were in the pure element of celestial joy. O, think of being in heaven with the blessed Jesus and

his holy angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect, a thousand years! The bare thought of it is enough to make the heart of the believer, even on earth, leap for joy. Only think of being in heaven amid all its glories and its joys a thousand years! And when that thousand years shall have passed away, then another thousand years! and then another! and yet another! Bless the Lord!

“When we’ve been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun;
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
Than when we first begun.”

What did I say?—Ten thousand years! Let every leaf of the forest stand for ten thousand years of celestial joy; let every dew drop of the morning stand for ten thousand years of celestial joy; let every star in yonder firmament stand for ten thousand years of celestial joy; add all these together, and even when all these ages heaped on ages shall have passed away, we shall have no less days to sing God’s praise than when we first begun? O! who can measure the millionth part of the height and depth, and length and breadth, of this ocean of eternal happiness—eternal joy! And yet, the sinner prefers temporal pleasure, chaffy and transitory as it is, to the whole of it. Only think! he prefers temporal pleasure to eternal happiness! that is, he prefers the rags to the

robes, the pebbles to the jewels, the shadow to the substance! Is the sinner a wise man? Men of intellect, judge ye!

But if the folly of the sinner appears in the choice which he makes, it will appear with equal clearness

II. In the conduct which he pursues. The sinner, who, taken up with the things of time and sense, puts away from him the higher claims of God, and his undying soul, does many very foolish things, for example:

First.—He rebels against God his Maker, refusing to submit to his authority, and practically saying by his conduct, Who is the Lord, that I should obey him? I know not the Lord, neither will I obey his voice. This is impious, and most foolish too. The sinner rebels against God his Maker, and what harm has God his Maker done him? Was it any harm in God to love the world, and give his Son to die for its redemption? Was it any harm in God to institute the ministry of reconciliation, and send one servant after another to persuade the sinner to ground the weapons of his rebellion, that it might be well with him in the latter end? Was it any harm in God to send his Holy Spirit to move upon his heart to draw him to the foot of the cross, from which spot alone he can ascend to glory? Or, was it any harm in God to shower down blessings upon the sinner without number, and keep

him alive, when he was not prepared to die? And yet, the sinner rebels against him! O what ingratitude, and what folly! And is there not also madness in this folly? Who is the sinner, and who is God, that the sinner should rebel against his Maker? The sinner, who is he? Is he not an atom of an atom world? And God, who is he? Is he not that great and glorious Being, who fills with his presence all immensity? Who is the sinner? Is he not a worm of the dust, and crushed before the moth? And who is God? Is he not that great omnipotent Being, "who can create, and can destroy;"—who "can dash whole worlds to death, and make them when he please?" O think, the sinner is daily and hourly dependent upon God for every mercy, and even for every breath. Yes, it is in God that the sinner "lives and moves, and has his being;" and this God can, in a moment, raise him to heaven, and make him an angel of light; or, in a moment cast him down to hell, and make him a spirit for ever damned. Now, these things being so, the smallest particle of common sense one would think sufficient to show that the first and most important thing is to secure the favour of God; for if God be for us, who can be against us? and if God be against us, who can be for us? Now, although this principle is just as clear as the sun in the heavens, or, as clear as anything can be, yet the sinner rebels

against his Maker; and, what is more, continues in this rebellion; yes, obstinately continues in this rebellion, not for days and weeks only, but for many months, many years! And that too, when this all-powerful and gracious God, by his word, his providence, and his Spirit, is kindly following him, saying, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" and whilst, also, the remarkable words of the apostle are yet sounding in his ears: "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God." In spite of all, the sinner rebels against his Maker. Is the sinner a wise man? O no! his conduct, in this matter, is certainly most foolish and unwise; and this is not the only example, for

Second.—The sinner is going to an eternal world, and makes no preparation for that eternal world. If a person knew that he must go to Oregon, or some other distant country, and there spend the remnant of his life on earth, would it not be right and proper for him to think upon the matter, and make some preparation; especially if, every now and then, he saw a neighbour starting for that country, and knew not but he himself might have to set out the very next day? But suppose, in these circumstances, he should take no interest in the matter, make no inquiries about the soil there, nor the society there, and make no provision

for his well-being and comfort there, would not this be very strange? But the sinner is going to that world from whose bourne no traveller returns, and he makes no preparation whatever. And, observe, it is quite possible for a person to go to Oregon, or any distant country on earth, and even when no preparation had been made, find himself very comfortably fixed when arrived there; but he who enters the eternal world without preparation, must be miserable for ever! And yet the sinner makes no preparation. O, what an awful infatuation this is! A certain nobleman, as the story goes, had a rude wit in his employ, called a fool. Amused with a remark of his one day, the nobleman gave him his walking cane, with this injunction:—"Take this walking cane, and keep it until you meet with a greater fool than yourself, and then give it to him." The man kept the walking cane for a length of time, not meeting with any one whom he deemed a greater fool than himself. In process of time, however, his lordship was laid upon a dying bed, and sending for the rude wit, addressed him thus: "Farewell!" "Where is your lordship going?" said the man. "I am going to my long home," replied the nobleman. "Your long home!" rejoined the man—"Your long home! How long is your lordship going to stay there?"—"O," said the dying nobleman, "I am never to return!"—"Never to return!"

exclaimed the man, "never to return!"—"No," said the nobleman, "I am going to eternity, and am never to return."—"Has your lordship made any preparation for that long home?" "No," said he, "I have not."—"Then," replied the man, "your lordship will please to take the walking cane! you are certainly a greater fool than I am;—please to take the walking cane." If this be deemed a quaint illustration, sure I am, it is forcible, and much to the point. Only think! the sinner is going to an eternal world! In that eternal world there is a heaven of unspeakable and everlasting happiness for those who have made preparation for it; and for those who have made no preparation, there is a world of woe, an awful hell, which must be his dwelling-place to all eternity. And yet the sinner makes no preparation! Regardless of his eternal interests, he is trifling with his undying soul. Is this acting the part of a wise man? Is it not rather acting the part of a madman and a fool? O ye, who, carried away by the things of this world, forget that you have undying souls—that you must soon be in eternity—and must soon be in heaven or in hell, O think about your need of preparation, before the season for it be over and gone for ever! But

A third exhibition of the sinner's folly is this: He is condemned; a pardon is freely offered by the Lord, and he rejects the offered pardon.

Now, this crowns the climax of the sinner's folly, and beyond this, I see not how madness and folly can go another step! Were you, my brethren, ever in a court-house? Did you see a man there arraigned on a charge of murder? The judge seated, the jury empannelled, the witnesses giving in their testimony? Were you present when the jury brought in the verdict, guilty? Were you present when the judge pronounced the sentence of death? O what a moment that was! What breathless silence! What painful sympathy! How was every eye fixed upon the unhappy criminal, upon whom the dreadful sentence of the law had been pronounced! You expected, no doubt, to see him tremble and turn pale. Suppose he cared nothing about the matter; and suppose his counsel should have come to him, and said, "O, my dear client, you are condemned, and I must confess, righteously condemned; but I can't bear the idea of the sentence of the law being inflicted upon you!—I will obtain a reprieve for you, if I can; I will get up a petition; I will go to the governor; I will leave no stone unturned to obtain a pardon for you."—Suppose, I say, in such circumstances, the prisoner at the bar, condemned, should turn upon his heel and reject the kind offer—would not the judge, the jury, the spectators—would not all pronounce him a fool? Only think: the man is condemned to die, and one offers to obtain a

pardon for him, and he rejects the kind offer. Surely the man is not in his right mind.—Now, this is a true picture of the sinner—every feature exact. Is not the sinner found guilty? Is he not condemned? Yes, for the Bible says, expressly, “He that believeth not is condemned already;” aye, and according to John the Baptist, “the wrath of God abideth upon him”—hangs over his head, like the stormy cloud, ready to burst at any moment; or, like the axe of the executioner, liable to fall without a moment’s warning. Now, in these fearful circumstances, the blessed Saviour, the sinner’s friend and advocate, comes to him with tenderness and compassion, and says, “O poor sinner, art thou condemned? Yes, righteously; but, sinner, I bring you good news! I am come all the way from heaven to earth to seek and to save that which was lost! I have made the great atoning sacrifice, and now, here is a free and full pardon offered to you, through faith in my blood!” Take it, sinner, and your sins shall all be blotted out! Take it, sinner, and you shall have peace with the God that made you! Take it, sinner, and you shall die in peace, and in the world to come, heaven shall be your final home—O take it, sinner, your loving, dying Saviour bids you take it. It cost him much; even tears, and groans, and streaming blood, and the painful death of the cross; but, to you, it is offered “without money and

without price!" And now, what does the sinner do? Clinging to his lusts, he rejects the offered pardon! He does more than this—he grasps, as it were, the soldier's spear, and thrusts it into the Saviour's side! He treads under foot the blood of the Son of God! "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!" Ah! my brethren, whether we consider the sinner's choice, or sinner's conduct, we see that folly, consummate folly, is stamped upon the whole. And now, what is to be the end of these things? What says our text? "Shame shall be the promotion of fools." O what a poor reward this is; and yet it is all that such folly deserves. As he that sows to the wind can reap nothing better than the whirlwind, so "shame shall be the promotion of fools." There is, if I mistake not, irony as well as truth in the language of our text—"Shame shall be the promotion of fools." The idea is this: Pluming themselves upon their own supposed wisdom, and lightly esteeming the truly pious, they entertain high expectations, and promise themselves great things; but shame, everlasting shame only, must be the result of all the towering and vain expectations with which impenitent sinners here are pleased to deceive themselves. Shame, we have reason to believe, will constitute one very bitter ingredient in the torment of the damned in hell. Daniel has reference to this matter: "Many that sleep in the dust of the earth,"

says he, "shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

This shame will arise from several sources :

1. From disappointment. Should a soldier be cashiered for cowardice, when he expected promotion for his supposed bravery; should an author be cried down, when he expected great applause; or, should a person find that no mention is made of him in a will, when he expected to be one of the principal heirs; in all such cases, disappointment would be a matter of shame. How much more when the sinner wakes up in eternity, and finds all his fond hopes of heaven blasted for ever! But shame will arise,

2. From the full development of character which shall then be made. I suppose that the most moral person in this assembly would not have things that he has thought, and said, and done, to be revealed, even to his own domestic circle, for any consideration; and if this disclosure were made, he would be overwhelmed with shame. What, then, will be the amount of that shame which shall come upon the sinner when everything which he has ever thought, and said, and done, shall be revealed, in the presence of God, and angels, and men, in the great judgment day?

Some years since, a certain man in one of our Atlantic cities was charged with a very

base act—was charged with opening a letter which had been put into the post-office, and divulging some family secrets which that letter contained. He denied the charge. A committee was appointed to investigate the charge, and make a report. I was present when the report was made. In the presence of some one or two hundred citizens, the chairman of the committee came forward and said—"We have investigated the charge alleged against the gentleman, and find it to be true." I saw the man the moment his character was thus blasted for ever. After one frantic effort with a pistol to take the life of the person who had thus exposed him, he dropped his head; he could not bear to look upon man or woman any more; and, returning to his lodgings, he laid himself down upon his bed, and died of a broken heart. Shame killed him. And now, if the divulging of one base act in such an assembly on earth occasioned him such overwhelming, heart-breaking shame, O! what intolerable shame must come upon the sinner when every base act, when every impure thought, when every unlawful deed shall be revealed, as we have said, before God, and angels, and men! Methinks, in anguish, he will exclaim—"O that I had never had a being!" or, "O that I could now hide me beneath the mountain's base or the ocean's wave!" "Shame shall be the promotion of fools!"

3. A third source of shame will be the manifestation of the sinner's folly. If a person has acted very foolishly, even in common matters, he does not like it to be generally known and talked about; but his consummate folly in relation to spiritual matters must be known and read of all men—aye, and it will be seen and felt by himself, in a manner never seen and felt before. That this matter may be presented more clearly, suppose that this were the judgment day—trump sounding, dead rising, God descending, angels shouting, devils wailing, earth burning! Suppose all the solemnities and terrors of the judgment day now before us! The sinner, now stationed upon the left hand, finds himself lost for ever. He looks back upon the scenes of this world, and he remembers—(O, he would forget everything if he could, but he cannot—"Son, remember!" said Abraham to the rich man in hell)—yes, whether the sinner choose it or not, he must look back upon the scenes of this world—whether he choose it or not, he will remember—what? Why, the choice which he made, and the conduct which he pursued on earth. For example, he will remember that when on earth, he preferred the favour of man to the favour of God! Now he sees this great God in all his grandeur and his glory; by his almighty arm bearing up heaven, earth, and hell; smiling upon the righteous and frowning upon the wicked; crowning with

bliss and glory the one, and pouring wrath and ruin upon the other. And O, to think that when on earth he preferred the favour of that man that rotted in the grave, or is now, perhaps, damned at his side, to the favour of this great and glorious God! O, how will the sinner be sensible of his folly then! How will he cry out, in the anguish of his soul, "O, my folly, my madness, when on earth! Of a truth, I preferred the rags to the robes, the pebbles to the jewels, the shadow to the substance. I never knew, O, I never knew that I was such a fool before!" And he will remember—what? Why, that when on earth he preferred the interests of the body to the interests of the soul. By that time he will have seen the body turned over to corruption and the worm, and now he sees the soul in all its capacity for happiness and misery;—he sees the souls of the righteous robed and crowned, rising, and shining, and corruscating in glory unspeakable; and sees the souls of the wicked shrouded in darkness and despair, given over to remorse and anguish which no tongue can tell! When these things are before his eyes, what must be his feelings to remember, that when on earth he preferred the interests of that poor dying body that had to lie down in the grave, to that soul so mighty to sustain an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory, or an exceeding great and eternal weight of sorrow? In this view of the

grandeur and capacity of the soul for happiness and misery, will he not cry out—O, fool! O, madman that I was in yonder world! to think more of my body than of my soul! to prefer the little interests of the one to the mighty interests of the other! Of a truth, I preferred the rags to the robes, the pebbles to the jewels, the shadow to the substance. I never, O, I never knew that I was such a fool before! And, there is heaven, too! what a world of glory and of joy? O, heaven, sweet heaven, to me lost for ever! And why? Because on earth I bartered it away for the poor, chaffy, short-lived pleasures of time and sense! Where was reason then, and whither had my understanding fled? Why was I so infatuated with the world? O, why did I prefer earth to heaven? Why did I prefer temporal pleasure to eternal happiness? O, my folly, my unspeakable folly! Yes, it is true, it is but too true, I was a fool in yonder world. I preferred the rags to the robes, the pebbles to the jewels, the shadow to the substance! And, only to think! I rebelled against that great and glorious God, and, although frequently warned, I made no preparation for this awful eternity; and, to crown my madness and my folly, although entreated, I refused offered pardon. Ah! yes—

“Yonder sits the slighted Saviour,
With the marks of dying love!

O that I had sought his favour,
When I felt his Spirit move :
Golden moments !
When I felt his Spirit move !”

4. The fourth and last source of shame which I shall mention is, the company with which the sinner shall be obliged to associate—not with the virtuous and the good, but with the infamous and the vile.—Only think! with murderers, and robbers, and thieves, and drunkards, and liars, and pirates, and gamblers, and hypocrites, and extortioners, and all the mean, and all the vile, and all the abominable that ever lived and ever died!—And to crown the whole, he must have his portion with devils damned, and all the foul spirits of the pit! O, to be grouped with such characters! to have no better society than this to all eternity! how overwhelming the thought, and how overwhelming the shame! Cut off from the sweet society of the heavenly world, sinners must be linked with the offscouring of all creation; and, verily, then shall be brought to pass the prediction of the Saviour, “There shall be weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth,” when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves cast out! O my soul! there must be mourning—mourning, at the judgment-seat of Christ. Parents and

children there must part; must part to meet no more. Husbands and wives there must part; must part to meet no more. Brothers and sisters, companions and friends, there must part; must part to meet no more. O, who can bear the idea of being excluded from the dwellings of the blessed, cut off from the society of those whom we loved on earth, and cast down to hell, there to associate with murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers; with robbers, and liars, and thieves, and swindlers, and pirates, and drunkards; and, as we said, with all the mean, and all the vile, and all the abominable! And how will it add to the sinner's anguish to think that by his continuance in sin he had made himself unfit for a better society and a better place! and how will conscience too, torment the sinner's soul, thundering in his ear the charge which he cannot deny—"Ye knew your duty and did it not." O yes, the sinner will be constrained to say, "I knew what was right, yet did what was wrong. O my folly, my madness on earth! and now I wake up to the full conviction of my folly and my madness, when it can avail me nothing. O it is too late now! The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and my poor soul is not saved. O that I could return to the earth once more! O that I could live my life over again! O that I had one hour

more to seek salvation in! and if this cannot be, O that I had never been born! or, O that I had slumbered for ever in my grave!"

My dear unconverted friends, think, O think upon these things! A want of thought has ruined many—let it not ruin you. O, come now, and let the subject matter of our discourse bear upon your own case. What is the choice which you have made, and what is the course of conduct which you have pursued? Have you chosen the favour of man in preference to the favour of God? and is this not a foolish choice? Then make this choice no more. From this moment seek the favour of God, as the object of chief desire. Have you not set a greater value upon the interests of the body than upon the interests of the soul? and have you not chosen temporal pleasure in preference to eternal happiness? O, be persuaded to do this no more, lest your precious souls be cut off from heaven, and you have none to blame but yourselves! Have you rebelled against your Maker? was this right? Have you neglected to make preparation for another and eternal world? would you approve of this if now laid upon a dying bed?—and have you rejected offered pardon? O, think what that pardon will be worth in that day which shall disclose "a God in grandeur, and a world on fire!" Come, my impenitent friends, O listen to my voice—O attend to my counsel; or ra-

ther, listen to the voice, and attend to the counsel of Him, who is your Maker, and who will soon sit in judgment upon your souls. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, "Consider your ways: Seek ye the Lord while he may be found: Call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy on upon him, and to our God for He will abundantly pardon."

"While God invites, how blest the day,
How sweet the gospel's charming sound!
Come sinners haste—O haste away,
While yet a pardoning God he's found."

SERMON VII.

THE DELUGE.

And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou, and all thy house, into the ark.
GEN. vii. 1.

THE five books of Moses were written more than three thousand years ago, and are supposed to be the most ancient records now upon earth. They give a view of patriarchal times, and carry up the history of the world to its very creation; indeed, the history opens with an account of the wonder working power of

God exerted upon "the void immense," bringing into existence the heavens and the earth, with all their rich and varied furniture. When the mighty work was done, it was all pronounced very good. Everything was beautiful; everything was perfect. The whole presented one unbroken scene of beauty and enchantment. It was the morning of creation, and most lovely was the morning! But, alas, too soon there was a sad change; for man, originally made in the moral image of his Maker, sinned! This withered everything beautiful upon earth; this

"Brought death into the world, and all our woe."

From the first moment of man's apostasy, the blighting influence of sin began to pass over the face of this fair creation, and its direful effects were seen and felt in various modes and forms; chiefly in the deep depravity of human nature, and in certain awful manifestations of the Divine displeasure against sinning man.

With regard to human depravity, consequent upon the fall, it is remarkable, that the first man ever born into the world proved a murderer, and the second was the person murdered. This was a sad beginning; and it seemed to portend most terrible and disastrous things in time to come. It is true, that at the birth of Enos, the grandson of Adam, there was a brightening of the prospect; "For," says

the historian, "then began men to call upon the name of the Lord;" but, alas! it was only as the beaming of light in a dark day; it soon passed away, and was succeeded by a deeper gloom than ever. Yes, for not very long after that period, according to the Scriptures, man became exceedingly corrupt. Iniquity began to abound in a most frightful manner. The earth was filled with violence. "And God saw," says the historian, "that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil, continually—and the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth; both man and beast.—But," continues the historian, "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Here is one faithful Abdiel amid legions of apostate spirits—one righteous Noah standing alone in his righteousness, in the midst of a world lying in wickedness. But, although solitary and alone, he was not overlooked. "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord—and the Lord said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence. Make thee an ark—and behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy

sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee ; they shall be male and female."

Never, my brethren, was there a more awful communication made from heaven to earth than this ; and never, it seems, was any divine command more promptly obeyed. "For," says an apostle, "by faith, Noah being warned of God, of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." Many things might have tempted him to demur. The work was great. The ark which he was required to construct, was to be three hundred cubits in length, fifty cubits in breadth, and thirty in height ; or, according to our measure, about five hundred feet long, eighty broad, and fifty high—a most gigantic structure. I have calculated the tonnage, and find it equal to that of some twenty merchant ships of the largest class, at the present time. The greatness of the work then might have caused him to hesitate in entering upon it. And another thing was this : Noah must have known very well, that in entering upon a work of this kind, so strange and unprecedented, he would most certainly subject himself to derision and contempt—would become the song of the drunkard, the butt of ridicule with many, and by all would be esteemed as a dreaming enthusiast,

a fool, and a madman ; but none of these things moved him. He had heard the voice of God, and faith was triumphant. He staggered at nothing. He verily believed that it would be, even as God had said ; and, therefore, according to all that the Lord had commanded him, so did he. And now, with zeal and determination, he enters upon this work—this strange work. The foundation of the ark is laid ; the gigantic structure rises ; and, as the work goes on, he warns the world of the ungodly of an approaching deluge, and calls upon them to repent and turn from their sins ; but his words seem to them as idle tales, which they believe not, and therefore his calls to repentance are disregarded. Their curiosity however is excited, and gathering around the ark in crowds, they affect to wonder what the good man means. “ He says there is going to be a flood ! a flood to drown the whole world ! Nonsense ! Who ever heard of such a thing ? Methuselah, that old man who died the other day, lived nine hundred and sixty and nine years—he never saw or heard of such a thing. A flood to drown the world ! It is all nonsense ! Where can so much water come from ? All perfect nonsense ! Poor old man ! Surely he has been dreaming, and his head is turned ! ” Thus, methinks, the unbelieving multitude derided the man of God, and made a mock of the whole affair ! The hireling workmen, too, methinks,

made themselves merry at Noah's expense; especially when, the shades of the evening being come, they left their work, and with their boon companions, merry over their cups, they would talk about the scenes of the day gone by. O what jesting and what merriment then! Methinks they would tell how serious and sad the old man looked; how, ever and anon, he would break out in the language of warning; and when he saw that they made light of it, how he would burst into tears, and weep aloud in the presence of them all! "Well, to be sure, it looks a little droll; but it is all nonsense—a dream, perhaps—some strange, foolish dream; but it happens very well for us, for the job is a good one, and the dreamer is good pay!" My brethren, I do not think that I have overcoloured the picture. No doubt such remarks were made, and many such trials Noah was called upon to endure. But he swerved not, but urged on the work, day after day; and as the time appointed drew on, methinks his warnings were yet more frequent and more loud.

And now, the ark is finished; the antediluvians have filled up the measure of their iniquity; the patience of God is exhausted, and the day of vengeance is just at hand!

But, as yet, all is calm and serene. There is nothing alarming in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth.

The shining sun, the azure sky, and the gentle breeze, present nothing portentous. The events now coming, tremendous as they are, cast no shadows before them. Everything is going on in the usual way; the beasts of the earth are roaming in the forest; the birds of the air are flying in the heavens, and the fish of the sea are sporting in the deep; still is heard the lowing of the oxen, the bleating of the sheep, and the music of the groves. The hum of industry too is heard on every hand, and the voice of jesting, and the voice of mirth, and the shout of the merry-hearted. They are buying and they are selling, they are planting and they are building, they are marrying and they are giving in marriage. I repeat it, there is nothing strange or alarming in heaven above, in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, but everything going on in the usual way. And now, in the very midst of this scene of universal and deep security, the voice of God is heard! "And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou, and all thy house, into the ark." The command is given, faith is again triumphant, and Noah leads his family into the ark. Yes, in the view of a wondering crowd this one righteous man leaves his dwelling, and with all his family following, he enters into the ark. And now, methinks, mirth and merriment are at their height; jesting and ridicule are on every hand. "Well done! the

old dreamer is gone into his ark, sure enough. Who ever thought he would carry the matter so far? Poor old man! now we know that he has been dreaming, and his head is turned, for we see no sign of a flood yet; and if he waits there until it comes, he will wait long enough, and if he never dies till this mighty deluge comes, he will live a little longer than Methuselah, we think!" But in the midst of their mirth and jesting, suddenly methinks, their faces turn pale. They tremble and exclaim, "Merciful God! what is this! The fowls of heaven are flying to the ark, and birds of every wing! And see, too, the beasts of the earth are coming from the forest in every direction! And only look upon the ground, how it is covered with creeping insects, and reptiles of every kind, all moving toward the ark, as if led on by some invisible hand, or some strange instinct—ominous of some coming evil. O! what can this be?" And now the mockers are held in check, and some are almost ready to rush to the ark and beg Noah to let them in; but it is too late now, for Noah and his family having entered in, and beasts, and birds, and creeping things, two of every kind, as the Lord commanded—Noah ceases to warn; the door of the ark is closed, and the doom of an incorrigible world is sealed for ever! And now there are strange, unprecedented sights, and voices inspiring terror. God frowns, and all

nature trembles at the frown of its Maker. The elements begin to jar, the sun is darkened; the earth begins to reel and stagger like a drunken man; the waters are troubled, there is a rumbling in the deep—flying clouds are seen; they pass swiftly over the face of the sky—darker clouds are rising, east, west, north, south; and, who ever saw clouds so frowning and so dark! and what flashes of lightning, and what mighty thunderings are these! And now the winds of heaven are let loose; they roar, and sweep tremendously over the earth; the rain descends in torrents, the storm rages more and more; the fountains of the great deep are broken up, and the windows of heaven are opened; and floods from beneath, and floods from above, mingling their waters, enlarge the dominions of the deep. The ark is afloat, and the rolling billows dash upon its sides, and bear it along in safety and in triumph. The storm increases, its violence is most terrific; there is one unbroken sheet of lightning, and mighty thunders upon mighty thunders rock the globe; amid jarring and roaring elements, heaven and earth seem mingling together, as if the last great day were come. The flood increases! old ocean's barriers exist no more! And where are the mockers and the jesters now? None are seen; for fear, now, is in every bosom; and in every face dismay. The cry of agony is heard, it comes from every quar-

ter, and the wild shriek of despair mingles with the howlings of the storm. The terrified multitudes, in wild alarm, rush from place to place seeking refuge, and finding none. O, how children cling to their parents, and wives to their husbands, and friend to friend, all crying for help, but crying in vain! Some hasten to the tops of their houses, but find no refuge there! Some plunge into the flood, and swimming around the ark, beg Noah to take them in; but the door of the ark is not opened, and they struggle, and sink to rise no more! Some rush to the hills, but all in vain, for the highest hills are covered, and they are swept away! Some climb the trees of the forest; but O, the swelling waters rise higher than the tallest trees, and they too are swept away. And now see the few that still survive—they are climbing the sides of the mountains, the flood pursues them; they seek safety on the tops of the highest cliffs;—but O, the relentless flood! it rises higher and higher still! And now the billows pass over the mountain tops, and the last remnants of the human race shriek, sink down, and are buried in the waters of the mighty deep! All is still now!—all, save the dashing of the billows, and the bellowing of the storm; and nought is seen on any hand, but one wide, boundless ocean, with its mighty billows tumbling round the globe. Yes, one thing more is seen—the ark! Noah's ark!—yonder it

is seen, riding in triumph upon the bosom of the troubled deep, amid floating carcasses, and the wreck of a ruined world.

There are some important remarks which I wish to make, bearing upon the subject before us. My first remark has reference to the deluge, as a matter of fact; and of this there can be no reasonable doubt, for the evidences thereof are found, not only in this volume, and in the traditions of almost all the nations of antiquity, but they are found inscribed upon the very face of the earth, even up to the present time. Marine shells, in immense banks, are now seen in Georgia, and in many other regions, in places remote from the ocean; and some years ago the skeleton of a whale was found embedded in the earth near the summit of one of the loftiest mountains in Asia. Denying the fact of the deluge, how can these things be accounted for? In boring the earth in numerous places, logs have been found buried forty, fifty, and even sixty feet below the surface. If there have been no overflowings and mighty stirring up of the waters, how can we account for so much sediment, or alluvial soil? Moreover, in the prairies of the southwest, lone rocks are found where no quarry exists; these rocks are of the same nature as those found in the Green Mountains of Vermont, and, if torn from those mountains, and rolled so far, how violent and mighty must have been the current which detached

these rocks from the mountains, and bore them with such fury on! But some have said, the story of Noah's flood is all nonsense—a perfect fable. There could be no such thing. And why? There is not enough water in the atmosphere and connected with the surface of the globe, to submerge it in water. This has not been proved; but suppose it were so, who can tell whether there may not be vast reservoirs of water in the centre of the earth, which by some chemical action might have been thrown upon the surface? And this idea seems to be sanctioned by the Psalmist, when, speaking of the creation of the earth, he says—"Thou hast founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." Moreover, the idea falls in most remarkably with these words of Moses:—"The fountains of the great deep were broken up." But suppose it be ascertained that there are no such reservoirs of water in the heart of the earth—how easy would it have been for Him who originally "stretched the north over the empty place, and hung the earth upon nothing"—I say, how easy would it have been for Him to change the polarity of the globe. This done, the natural consequence would be, the emptying of the waters of the ocean upon the land. This would account for all the facts which we have stated; and it is a remarkable circumstance, and strongly corroborating this position, that the great desert of Sahara appears

evidently to have been the ocean's bed. But we need say nothing more on this point, for within my own recollection, the enemies of the Bible have changed their notes, and those who were wont to say that Noah's deluge was a fable, now admit it to be a fact—certain geological discoveries made within twenty years past, having placed the matter beyond all reasonable doubt.

The second remark touching the deluge, has reference to its cause. And here we are not left to conjecture, for the Scriptures are perfectly clear upon this point. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth; and therefore the Lord said unto Noah, "The end of all flesh is come before me. Make thee an ark, and behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven." Observe, my brethren, it was sin that occasioned the deluge. What a dreadful evil then must sin be! Some persons look upon sin as a light and venial affair. They have been indulging in it, for, lo! these many years, and have little concern about the matter. O, could they see it as it appears in the sight of a holy God, methinks they would tremble and cry out with the Jerusalem convicted sinners, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" It is supposed that there were as many persons in the time of the flood, as there are at the pre-

sent time, say eight hundred millions; and if so, what a fearful comment upon the evil of sin. Eight hundred millions of human beings swallowed up in one wide, yawning, terrific, watery grave! O, methinks the flashing of the lightning, and the pealing of the thunder—the roaring of the storm, and the dashing of the waters—all, all united to send the notes of warning far and wide—Stand in awe, and sin not. O, sinner, remember you have sinned against the same God, that those, in the days of Noah, sinned against; and, be sure, your sin will find you out; for you and God must meet. And, whether you choose it or not, you must give account for all the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or bad; and how dreadful will it be for you, if you be not prepared for the reckoning!

But this leads to a third remark.—The deluge may be considered a type of the judgment of the great day; and the scenes then presented, as typical of the scenes which will be spread before the eyes of all when God shall, in the winding up of all human events, come with his chariots like a whirlwind to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire. If the deluge was a tremendous affair, the day of judgment will be more tremendous still. When God destroyed the world by the waters of the deluge, he came to reckon with the sinners of only one generation; but when he shall

come, in the day of final judgment, he will come to reckon with the sinners of every generation. Hence, in reference to it, it is said, "The great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand."

"Day of judgment! day of wonders!
Hark! the trumpet's awful sound!
Louder than a thousand thunders,
Shakes the vast creation round!"

O, what scenes of terror will then be presented! When the deluge came, the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened; and the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and one vast and mighty tornado was upon the face of the whole earth, striking with consternation all the millions doomed to perish! But, O, how much more terrible will be the scenes of the judgment! "Great day of God Almighty and of the Lamb!"

"Whence come that darkness? Whence those yells of woe?
What thunderings are these which shake the world?
Why fall the lamps from heaven as blasted figs?
Why tremble righteous men? Why angels pale?
God comes! God in his car of vengeance comes!
Hark! Louder on the blast come hollow shrieks
Of dissolution! In the fitful scowl
Of night, near and more near angels of death
Incessant flap their deadly wings, and roar
Through all the fervid air! The mountains rock!
The moon is sick! Stars cease your dancing now,
Your graves are dug among the dismal clouds,
And angels are assembling round your bier."

“And I saw,” says the apostle John, “a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged, every man according to their works.” Nothing can be more terribly sublime than this description. Notice—“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away; and there was found no place for them.” Here is the appearing of the final Judge, and, as an effect, the vanishing away of the heavens and the earth! As the sun, rising in peerless brightness, throws its splendours upon the world slumbering in darkness, and with its effulgence chases away the shades of night, and the mists of the morning; even so, at the coming of the final Judge, the heavens and the earth, substantial as they are, shall be only as the shades of the night, and the mists of the morning. Smitten by the living and insufferable effulgence of his glory, they shall vanish away as the shades of the

night and the mists of the morning! And what, poor sinner, will then become of thee? Ah, my brethren, believe me, the day of judgment will come. It is no fiction; it is a great Bible truth. The day of judgment will come, and you and I must witness all its dread solemnities!—Aye, and then that sentence shall be pronounced upon us, which will place us in heaven or in hell! which will number us with angels of light or spirits damned! and, O, remember this sentence admits of no reversal; it will be registered in the archives of heaven, and registered for eternity! Wo! wo! wo! to those not prepared for the judgment! It would have been better for them had they never been born!

My fourth remark is this:—Noah's ark may be considered as a type of Christ. One was of divine appointment, and so is the other. The one was the only refuge—the only means of safety, and so is the other. All who were not in the ark perished, and out of Christ assuredly there is no salvation. "There is salvation in none other," says Peter. "Other foundation," says Paul, "can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ." And what says John the Baptist? "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; but he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him."

According to the Scriptures, God is, in

Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; but out of Christ, God is a consuming fire. O, my brethren, believe me, the judgment is coming! the day of wrath is drawing nigh, and verily "None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good."

Let it sink down in the ears of all, and never be forgotten, that when God arises to judgment, Christ, our blessed Saviour, is the sinner's only hope and only refuge; for then the arrows of vengeance shall fly on every hand, and strike every spot not protected by the shield of a Saviour's righteousness.

When the deluge came, those not in the ark were, no doubt, filled with strange alarm, and in their terror sought refuge, some in one place and some in another. Doubtless, some ascended the tops of their houses, but found no safety there! Some climbed the trees of the forest, some the lofty hills, and some the towering mountains, and some, too, swam around the ark, but all in vain! *Within* the ark was peace, within was safety; but *without* was wrath and ruin, desolation and death. So sinners may seek safety—some in one thing and some in another: one relying upon his own righteousness, and another upon the intercession of the saints—one upon his prayers and tears, another upon his numerous and splendid charities—but all in vain! Absolutely, Christ is the sinner's only refuge—the sin-

ner's only hope. In Christ the sinner is safe and happy; without Christ, lost to all eternity.

And now, these things being so, permit me to make a spiritual and practical application of the subject:—"And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou, and all thy house, into the ark." If there be an unconverted father present, to him I would now address myself with earnestness and affection. O, thou, who art the head of your family—thou upon whose arm leans an affectionate wife, and around whom cluster beloved sons and daughters—come into the ark! You ought to have come a long time ago, for, no doubt, since you have had a family, you have received many calls and many warnings. Where is that beloved Joseph? that dear little Benjamin? that idol of your affections? Alas! torn from your fond embrace by the relentless hand of death, that loved one now sleeps in the grave! And was not that providence which made this sad breach in your family a loud call? And perhaps another was taken, and yet another! But it may be you have had a call of another kind. Some of your household have been brought into the fold of Christ. What! shall the child be brought in and the parent left out? As the head of your family, it was your duty to "allure to brighter worlds and lead the way." And shall you linger whilst your own children are pressing in? O, come

into the ark ! For your own sake, come in, for verily the responsibility of a parent is great, and most fearful must be the reckoning in the day of judgment for those heads of families who have neglected to train up their children in the way in which they should go. I knew an unconverted daughter once, who, dying in despair, reproached her parents upon her bed of death for neglecting her precious soul. "O my father and my mother," said she, "you brought me up to nothing." O, how terrible is the thought of sons and daughters in the world laying the blame of their damnation upon their ungodly parents ! O, venerated father, listen to me. O thou, who art the head of your family, and king of your household—I repeat it—thou upon whose arm leans an affectionate wife, and around whom cluster sons and daughters, who respect and love you, come into the ark ;—come, even if not for your own sake, yet for the sake of those who are bone of your bone, and flesh of your flesh. The influence of parents upon their children, whether they desire it or not, is very great. If parents are prayerless and worldly-minded, children are likely to be prayerless and worldly-minded too ; and if they neglect the Bible and the ordinances of God's house, their children are likely to do the same.

I recollect the case of a young man whose father was an unconverted man, when I urged

him to attend to the great concern—"Sir," said he, "it is not worth while to speak to me on that subject, my father is not a Christian, and I don't care about being a better man than my father." Ah me!—those children whose parents are not pious are truly to be pitied, for their prospects for heaven are dark indeed. Some years since, the assertion having been made, that the children of the pious were no better than others, an investigation was made; and the families within a certain district having been divided into three classes—those in which both parents were professedly pious, those in which only one parent was a professor, and those in which neither parent made any pretensions to religion—it was ascertained that of the children over ten years of age, in the first class, two-thirds were hopefully pious, in the second class, about one-third, and in the third class, not more than one-twelfth. In comparing the first and third classes, it was found that, of one hundred and twenty-five children of the first class, where both parents professed religion, eighty-four were members of some church; whilst, of one hundred and ninety-nine children of the third class, in which neither parent professed religion, only fourteen were connected with any church. This speaks volumes, and makes a most powerful appeal to parents on the score of their responsibility. O, if the venerated father who

has all along neglected the great salvation, should now, at last, make a move toward the cross of Christ—should come out, and take his stand openly upon the Lord's side, what a powerful, what a thrilling effect it would have upon all the members of the family! The beloved parent setting out for heaven, the children are not willing to be left behind. O, then, thou respected and most responsible head of the family, come into the ark! Yes, come, and come not alone; bring your wife along with you. What! are you willing to be separated from your bosom companion—and separated for ever? Surely you cannot bear the thought—then persuade her to come along with you. And will you not bring your sons also with you? are they not all dear to your heart? and which will you consent to leave out? the eldest or the youngest? shall it be Reuben, the beginning of your strength, or Benjamin, the son of your old age? And your daughters, too, will you not prevail upon them also to come in? they love you much; cast your eye over their sweet faces, and say which one are you willing to see go down into the pit. Is it the one that is married, or the one that is at home? is it Margaret, or is it Louisa? is it Mary, or your dear little Susan? O, leave none out—bring them all into the ark! Noah led all his household into the ark. Why should you not do the same? O, how happy to have

a family united on earth, and unbroken in heaven! I recollect seeing once the picture of a resurrection scene. The graves were opening—the dead arising; there was one lovely group—a family—a whole family! father, mother, sons and daughters, all radiant and happy, ascending to the skies together. Once more then, I say to thee, venerated parent, as the Lord said unto Noah, “Come thou, and all thy house, into the ark.” Come, this day. O, should you now make a move, how would it rouse those around you, and especially your own sons and daughters. Young man, young maiden, am I wrong? Should that dear and venerated father of yours come out, and confess Christ before the world, would you be indifferent to your own soul’s salvation? Here then, beloved parent, is a powerful appeal to the best feelings of your nature; here is a strong motive, a double motive, nay, a motive multiplied according to the number of your children. O come then; “come thou, and all thy house, into the ark.”

But perhaps the parents are already in the ark, and the children are not, or at least some of them. O, ye children of pious parents—ye children of the covenant—you upon whom baptismal water has been poured—your parents are in the ark, why linger you without? Your parents are going to heaven—why should you not go along with them? Are you willing to

be separated in the great day? How can you bear the thought of seeing them on the right hand of the Judge, whilst you are placed on the left? Of seeing them rising and shining with angels in glory, whilst you are sinking down deeper and deeper in the dark realms of wo! O, it seems to me that if the children of the pious go down to hell, they will have no common damnation. Their peculiar advantages, and then that terrible separation will add much to their pangs, and the fearfulness of their doom. Only think! suppose one of Noah's sons, when invited by his father, had refused to go with him into the ark—what would have been his feelings when the deluge came? Whilst filled with alarm, and crying out in terror, amid the dashing of the billows and the roaring of the storm, would he not have looked toward the ark in special agony, and exclaimed—"Yonder is the ark, safe upon the bosom of the troubled deep! My father is there, my mother is there, my brothers are there—all, all in safety there—and I am lost! I too was invited, yea, urged to enter in with them; why did I not? O my folly! my madness! I have brought this evil upon myself! Why did I not enter in? Why did I not enter in? It is too late now! O, it is too late now!

My dear young friends—ye children of the covenant—ye who are so tenderly beloved, for whom so many prayers have been offered, and

over whom so many tears have been shed, O, be persuaded to come into the ark! In the great and dreadful day of judgment you will need a Saviour; O, embrace him now. Cast in your lot with your pious friends, and with them be safe and happy, now and for evermore.

May the God of heaven touch your heart, and incline you to do that which you will wish you had done in that day which shall disclose "a God in grandeur and a world on fire."

SERMON VIII.

WAR IN HEAVEN.

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.—REV. xii. 7, 8.

THE visions of John in the Isle of Patmos, are in general, mysterious and sublime. But, although their mystical and prophetic import may not be fully understood, they may, nevertheless, suggest many useful and awakening thoughts. The passage at present under consideration is not entirely free from difficulty; and commentators have different views of the subject. Some suppose that by the dragon, we

are to understand the Pagan Roman Empire; by Michael, the Christian Roman Empire; by Heaven, the throne of the Roman Emperors; and by the war in heaven is meant the different and opposite counsels of Pagan and Christian Roman Emperors. Without attempting to settle the mystical or prophetic import of the passage, I wish, at this time, to consider it as pointing to an event which literally took place in heaven; an event most memorable indeed; which has awakened the attention of the universe, changed the face of creation, and has been productive of most direful consequences to angels and to men: I mean the fall of rebel-angels in heaven.

My brethren, God is the Creator and Sovereign of the universe. Millions of worlds roll around his throne, and no doubt all are inhabited by intelligent creatures. Of these intelligent beings, only two orders are known to us—angels and men; both, originally pure and upright, were, according to the Scriptures, placed in a state of probation, and made free to stand, yet liable to fall. The angels were first created. They were a superior order, and were to stand or fall, each for himself. Man, to stand or fall in his federal head. Some of the angels, called elect, kept their first estate, and were confirmed in a state of purity and happiness; others, according to the Scriptures, kept not their first estate. They sinned and fell.

What their sin was, we know not, for the Bible has not revealed it. It is no matter. Suffice it for us to know that they sinned. That moment the golden chain of love which bound them to the throne of God, was broken for ever! They assumed the character of sinners; of rebels against the Divine Majesty. What daring acts of opposition they attempted, we know not; but there is reason to believe, that as they presumed to rebel against their Maker, so they also presumed, openly and positively, to resist his high authority. And, doubtless, God made use of some instruments in punishing them. This would be in perfect harmony with his general dealings in punishing sin; for when he would root out the Canaanites for their impieties, he sent against them Joshua and the tribes of Israel; and when he would punish the Jews for their rejection of the Messiah, he raised up against them Titus and the Roman army. Angels too, we find, have been employed in services of a similar kind. It was an angel, you recollect, that in one gloomy, disastrous night, slew all the first born in the land of Egypt. And was it not an angel also, who entered the camp of Sennacherib, and in one night laid low in death one hundred and eighty-five thousand men before the walls of Jerusalem! Why then may we not suppose, that when the apostate spirits were driven from heaven, it was done by holy angels, led on by

Michael the archangel? So, that, literally, "There was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven." My brethren, think me not fanciful. I have not selected this text as the groundwork of any vain speculations. I have no wish to amuse you with any conceits or imaginations of my own. The subject I trust you will find to be one of deep and solemn interest, and of great practical importance. I confess I like the subject, because it serves to present vividly, and in a new aspect, some great truths which are too little thought upon. We wish now,

I. To consider the character of the war of rebel angels in heaven, and

II. To compare and contrast it with the war of rebel men on earth.

I. The character of the war of rebel angels in heaven. It has several features, as we may gather from various parts of the sacred Scriptures.

First. It was wilful; I mean they brought it upon themselves. Certainly they came from the hands of their Creator pure and happy, and if originally placed in a state of probation, as the Bible clearly gives us to understand, then of course, they must have been free agents.

“Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith and love,
When what they needs must do, appeared
Not what they would. What praise could they receive,
What pleasure, God, from such obedience paid?
When will and reason, of freedom both despoiled,
Made passive both, had served Necessity,
Not God. They therefore as to right belonged,
So were created.”

We dare not say that, subsequently, God exerted any positive influence upon their will, inclining them to sin. This would be an impeachment of the goodness of God, as though he took pleasure in the misery of his creatures. It would impugn his wisdom, as though he knew not at first, how properly to create these angels; nay, more, it would arraign his justice, for had he done it, he would have destroyed their free agency—he would have changed their original constitution; and, in fact, would have been the author of their sin? No, no! they were made, strictly speaking, free agents, and so they continued until their fall. But mark! if free agents, of course, whilst free to stand, yet liable to fall. They fell! God was not the author of their fall. No, but as one well expresses it—they fell “self-tempted, self-depraved.”

“————— They themselves decreed
Their own revolt: not God. If he foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,

Which had proved no less certain, unforeknown;
So, without least impulse, or shadow of fate,
Or aught by him, immutably foreseen,
They trespassed."

This view of the matter, falls in precisely with the language of the Bible; for it tells us that the angels sinned, that they kept not their first estate, but left their habitations; all of which phrases evidently imply a voluntary, wilful act of their own. But this wilful apostasy on the part of rebel angels was the procuring cause of their expulsion, or the war in heaven; therefore, on the part of these once exalted, now fallen spirits, it was a wilful war.

Secondly. It was an irreconcilable war—and that, both on the part of God, and with regard to rebel angels also. 1. It is irreconcilable on the part of God. Let us for a moment look at the state of the case. God is the alone Monarch of all worlds. The whole creation is his empire, and all intelligent creatures the rightful subjects of his moral government. Now, it is a matter of the last importance, that the honours of the divine government be maintained, and that no attribute of God, and no law which he has framed for the well-being of his creatures, should be trampled upon; and if trampled upon, not only does the justice and the honour of God, but the tranquillity and well-being of all worlds require that this act, so sinful and dangerous, should not be permit-

ted to pass with impunity. Now, when angels sinned, they insulted the Divine Majesty; violated the laws framed for the well-being of creation, and therefore endangered the happiness of all worlds. This act must not be permitted to pass unpunished. Ah! my brethren, if we could only understand the full malignity of sin—if we could only understand the great dishonour it brings upon God, and the direful consequences it would produce throughout all worlds if permitted to pass with impunity, we would immediately perceive that, without some effectual plan devised to satisfy the law and justice of God, God could never be reconciled to sinning angels. According to the Scriptures no plan has ever been devised, nor ever will be; hence, the fire prepared for the devil and his angels is an everlasting fire. Moreover,

2. This war is irreconcilable on the part of rebel angels also, for when they sinned, that moment their natures were changed. Their moral powers were broken, and their very spirits poisoned. Love, once triumphant, was succeeded by hatred, deadly and eternal hatred. The passions of the soul, and the affections of the heart, which once so sweetly harmonized, were thrown into disorder and became as jarring elements, or as the troubled sea that cannot rest. According to the sacred Scriptures, fallen angels have no tender feelings—no re-

lenting thoughts. All is malignant rancour,
and therefore,

“—— Never can true reconciliation grow
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep;
Which would but lead them to a worse relapse,
And heavier fall.”

To this hour Satan, or, as he is here termed, the dragon, and his angels, are as much opposed to their Maker as they ever were. And what though we cannot see them “hurling defiance to the vault of heaven,” nor hear them blaspheming the God of heaven, because of their pains, yet the proof thereof is seen in the faded beauties of this once fair creation, and heard in the groans of the sick and the dying. Satan, vanquished on the plains of heaven, has, so to speak, shifted the scene of warfare. Raging with malice, he has come down to earth, here to continue his impious struggle against the Most High. Long has he been striving to blast the works of God, and, alas! how has he succeeded in robbing man of his primeval innocence, and in converting a blooming Eden into a vale of tears and field of blood! Ever since the fall of man, as we learn from the sacred volume, this enemy of God and man has been going about, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Rapid as lightning, and insatiable as death, he stops at nothing.

Lowering clouds of wrath alarm him not; quenchless fires of vengeance impede him not. It is his purpose, if he can, to defeat the counsels of his Maker, and send the ploughshare of ruin over all the works of God. Having succeeded in tempting our first parents, he presumed to tempt the Messiah himself, God's Eternal Son! Signally defeated by him, he still continues to stir up war against the remnant of his seed. This is no fiction. You recollect the language of our Saviour—"Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee, that he might sift thee as wheat:" and the apostle John, in reference to the period immediately preceding the millennium, says:—"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." And again this voice is uttered in heaven: "Wo to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Rev. xii. 10, 12. Hence it appears that Satan and his angels continue their opposition to their Maker, and will continue it until the winding up of all human events; when, as we are expressly told, he shall be cast into the bottomless pit, where the

beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever. The war, then, is absolutely irreconcilable.

3. It is an unreasonable war—on the part of rebel angels a most unreasonable war. It must be, for God, as an infinitely wise and good Being, could have given no just cause or occasion. The Bible tells us that God is love. This is indeed his memorial from all generations, even from all eternity; and even fallen angels cannot deny it—and why? God was such to them until they sinned. Yes, he brought them from the womb of nonexistence. He crowned them with glory and honour; placed them near his throne, and made them as happy as their natures would admit of; and yet, they kept not their first habitation—they rebelled!

“Ah, wherefore? He deserved no such return
From them, whom he created what they were,
In that bright eminence; and with his good
Upbraided none! Nor was his service hard;
What could be less, than pay Him thanks?
How due!”

Why, then, did they rebel? Was there anything in the *character* of God which they could impeach? Certainly not, for it was absolutely perfect. Was there anything in his *government* which they could condemn? By no means; for it is founded on the principles of infinite wisdom and eternal rectitude. Well,

was there anything in their *own circumstances* which could reasonably create discontent? O no, for they were in heaven, and their cup of bliss was overflowing. Why then did they rebel? Although we know what tempted them, yet, in the very nature of the case, it is evident that the war which they waged against their Maker was without cause, and therefore unreasonable. It was a war of ingratitude, of folly, of madness;—was a war against duty, against interest, against happiness itself: a war, in short, for which not only the justice of God must for ever condemn them, but the voice of reason, and the voice of the whole intelligent creation. Certainly, then, it was an unreasonable war.

Lastly: It was to rebel angels a most fatal and disastrous war. They gained nothing, but lost much. 1. They lost the favour of God, even that favour which is life, and that loving-kindness which is better than life. This they once enjoyed in plenitude and perfection; but now it is lost for ever! Never more shall they be permitted to come into the peaceful presence of their Maker! Never more share in the light of his countenance, or any tokens of his love! Nay more; having forfeited his favour, they must endure his withering frowns for ever! 2. They lost their own moral loveliness. Once, in the image of God, they were pure and lovely indeed! Every celestial virtue, every heavenly

grace was upon them. They were fairer than the roses of paradise, lovelier than the stars of the morning. But, alas! when they sinned, all was changed. No longer innocent, they became hateful; no longer the sons of God, they became demons of the pit. 3. They lost, moreover, their seats in heaven! O those sweet, those happy fields, where joy for ever reigns! To rebel angels they are lost for ever! Their seats are vacant now; their harps are thrown away, and "their place shall be found no more in heaven!" No more shall they mingle with the blessed; nor sweep their melodious strings; nor chant their heavenly songs. No more shall they climb the heights of bliss; nor range the fields of glory; nor dwell in the sweet vales of heaven! For their horrid guilt, they are in everlasting exile from that happy world! cast down to hell—and what kind of a place is that? a pit that has no bottom—a lake burning with fire and brimstone—

"A dungeon, horrible on all sides round,
As one great furnace flames! yet from those flames,
No light! but rather darkness visible!
Which serves only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes!"

My brethren, believe me, or rather believe the sacred volume, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. The rebel angels, in sinning against God, gained nothing, but lost

much! And so must it be with all who dare rebel against their Maker, and who with the Great Eternal provoke unequal war. But this leads us

II. To compare and contrast the war of rebel angels in heaven, with the war of rebel men on earth; and, for this purpose chiefly, have I selected the passage of Scripture now before us. The dragon and his angels gained no victories in heaven; but, shall I say it? they have succeeded in gaining allies on earth! Yes, the human race, seduced from their allegiance by the great tempter, have made common cause with fallen angels, and are now in arms against the everlasting God! Yes, awful and melancholy as the thought is, it is even so! Satan has succeeded in pouring much of his venom into the human heart; and multitudes of the human family are now ranged with him under the banner of revolt! Not all! No! blessed be God, some, sweetly subdued by heavenly grace, have laid down the weapons of their rebellion. Through the interposition of the great Redeemer, and the powerful energies of the Divine Spirit, they have made their peace with God; and now, ranged under his banner, they are the willing subjects of his moral government. But the multitude, the great mass of the human family, sorry am I to say, this moment, leagued with the dragon and his angels, are fighting against the God who made them.

Do you demand proof? Look around you, and see how many are enemies to God by wicked works—how many profane his Sabbaths! how many blaspheme his holy name! how many slight his word! how many reject the Son of his love! how many indulge in riot and debauchery, how many in theft and murder! Ah! my brethren, the fact is but too evident—the world lies in wickedness. It is now, and ever since the fall has been, a rebellious province of Jehovah's dominions. I have nourished and brought up children, says God, and they have rebelled against me. And does not the apostle Paul affirm that the carnal mind is enmity against God? and does he not address the unregenerate as those arrayed against their Maker. Notice his language: "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." The case is clear—all unregenerate sinners—(and do they not constitute the mass of the human family?)—are in a state of open opposition and downright rebellion against their Maker! O it is an impious contest, a most unholy war! But we promised to compare and contrast the war of rebel men on earth, with that of rebel angels in heaven. In many things the resemblance is most exact and striking; in only one thing is there a difference.

First. Was the war of rebel angels a wilful

war? So also is the war of rebel men. It is true the original dispensations to angels and to men were not the same. The former stood or fell, each for himself: the latter in their federal head, Adam, the head and representative of his race, broke covenant with God—wilfully sinned, and thus, so to speak, in his own name and that of all his posterity, declared war against his Maker, as a sovereign acting in behalf of the people whom he represents. “By one man’s disobedience,” says the apostle, “were many made sinners”—that is, the act of Adam, in breaking covenant with God, was reckoned as the act of his posterity; in proof of this position, we find the consequences of the fall extending to the whole human family. But there is another view of the matter. All mankind, it is true, by virtue of their connexion with Adam, as their federal head, are, equally with him, involved in the ruins of the fall; but infinite wisdom and love have planned and executed a scheme, by which the ruins of the fall may be restored, and man may again be brought into favour with his Maker. Our blessed Saviour having, by his death and sufferings, made the great atonement, the gospel of peace and reconciliation is preached, and all who will, are invited to come through the Mediator, and obtain peace with their offended Maker, and even everlasting life, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Now, those

who refuse and reject the overtures of mercy, do evidently continue in wilful rebellion, and in this way do, deliberately, to all intents and purposes, sanction the act of their federal head, and make it their own; and, that they are wilful in this matter, is evident from many passages of Scripture, especially from the language of our Saviour, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." Ah! my brethren, it is even so. God calls, but sinners will not hear. He stretches out his hand, but sinners will not regard. He offers them mercy on gospel terms, and repeatedly offers it, but they wilfully reject it; and, by their conduct, daringly say, with Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord, that we should obey him? we know not the Lord, neither will we obey his voice." And what is this but wilful rebellion? Besides, oftentimes the Spirit of God moves upon the heart of the sinner, but the sinner braces himself up against these divine influences; and the charge brought by Stephen against certain Jews in his day, may with but too much propriety be brought against many of the unconverted at the present time—"Ye uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye." In other words, in resisting the strivings of the Divine Spirit, and wilfully stifling their convictions, they fight against God, and there is a

wilfulness in this matter which adds greatly to their sin.

Secondly. Was the war of rebel angels an irreconcilable war? Thank God, here we can drop the comparison, and take up the contrast. Yes, on this theatre of war, in the midst of heaven-daring rebels, our blessed Redeemer has, by the shedding of his most precious blood, made the great atonement. Elevated upon the cross, this glorious God-man Mediator has, so to speak, laid one hand upon divinity and the other upon humanity, and in this way, has accomplished a blessed work of love and reconciliation—has thus opened up a way, whereby God can be just, and yet justify the penitent and believing sinner—the sinner who accepts of Christ as his surety and only hope; as it is written, “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” And again, “There is therefore now, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Ah! my brethren, had the blessed Jesus not interposed, the hope of heavenly grace had never cheered the heart of man! This is the Good Shepherd, who, when he saw a hundred worlds rolling around his Father’s throne, and this was lost, left the ninety-and-nine in the wilderness of space, and came to seek and to save this lost world!

“O love divine! Harp, lift thy voice on high!
Shout angels! Shout aloud ye sons of men,
And burn, my heart, with the eternal flame.”

Millions of the human family have already been reconciled to God by the death of his Son, and have been made for ever happy by redeeming love; and millions more, drawn from the standard of revolt, and ranged under the banner of the great Redeemer, shall yet enter the dwellings of the blest, and take rank amongst the angels of God, in glory everlasting. O how thankful should we be, that whilst the war of rebel angels is irreconcilable, the war of rebel men may be brought to a speedy and happy termination. This is a blessed truth, and I love to present it; but let it not be forgotten, that the period of possible reconciliation is a limited period. In this world sinners may make their peace with God—but in this world only. When death's leaden sceptre is laid upon the cold bosom, the state of the sinner is fixed for ever! Ever after there is no redemption, there is no hope!

“There are no acts of pardon passed,
In the cold grave to which we haste;
But darkness, death, and long despair,
Reign in eternal silence there!”

O how important is it, then, that every one of us diligently improve our day of grace on earth; and, with all our heart, seek salvation

while "pardon may be sought, and mercy may be found." But,

Thirdly. Was the war of rebel angels an unreasonable war? And what shall we say of the war of rebel men? O, my brethren, how shall we vindicate foolish, infatuated man? Angels sinned against creating goodness—man against redeeming love. Angels warred under black despair—man under hope of heavenly grace. The sword of justice pursued revolting angels—the wings of mercy were outstretched to shelter revolting man. And yet man rebels! Infatuated man! what would he have?—Riches? In rejecting the grace of God he rejects the true riches. Honour? There is no honour like that which cometh down from God only. Safety? Everlasting arms are round about them who put their trust in Israel's God. Happiness? And where can happiness be found but in Him who is the only true source and fountain of all enjoyment? And yet the sinner rebels! O how unreasonable! In rebelling against God, the sinner loses much, everything that should be dear and precious to the soul. And what does he gain? Nothing! literally nothing! except it be an upbraiding conscience, an aching heart, and a burning hell! O, how does the sinner sin against his own judgment, his own interest, and his own happiness! and moreover, against all motives and considerations which should affect him. He knows that

the way of transgressors is hard, and yet he sins on! He knows that his sins will find him out, and yet he sins on! He knows that the arm of God is powerful, and cannot be resisted, and yet he sins on! He knows that there is forgiveness for the penitent, and yet he sins on! And that certain damnation awaits the impenitent, and yet he sins on! Infatuated man! In the view of all the glories of the heavenly world—in view of all the horrors of the world of wo, and, moreover, in view of all the love of God, and all the agonies of a dying Saviour—in short, in view of every thing calculated to subdue and melt the heart, he sins on! Be astonished, O heavens! and O earth! earth! earth! hear the complaint of the Eternal God—"I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." But,

Fourthly. Was the war of rebel angels fatal and disastrous? So, also, most assuredly, will be the continued war of rebel men. Millions have already fallen in the impious contest, and shall rise no more. My friends, God is a God of power. His throne is in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all. There are none that can measure swords with him, nor snatch the sceptre from his hand, nor resist the power of his arm! He need only speak, and worlds on worlds would roll from his creative hand! He need only will it, and all would again sink

in fiery ruins! It is true, according to the Psalmist—"The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." Shall they succeed? Shall they prevail? What says the Psalmist again?—"He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh. The Lord shall have them in derision. He shall break them with a rod of iron; he shall dash them in pieces, like a potter's vessel." O, when God shall arise to judge the earth, what a day will that be! Great day of God Almighty and the Lamb! O, how will sinners then quail! how will every rebel's face gather blackness! For God will come to reckon with sinners then, and terrible will be the manner of his coming. Lightnings shall flash from his piercing eyes—thunders shall roll around his awful throne! Yea, he shall come with his chariots, like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire; and most fearful, indeed, will be the condition of those who shall then, as sinners, fall into the hands of the living God. They will call upon the rocks and the mountains to fall upon them! They will shriek in agony! They will wish they had never been born, or had slumbered for ever in the silent grave. O, my fellow sinner, think upon this matter now, before it be for ever

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My brethren, our text this morning is an interesting one; and, viewed in the application which we have made of it, it is to us of deep personal interest and importance. "There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven." Remember, the scene is changed, but the war is not ended yet. Yes, here! here on this globe of ours, the warfare is going on still! for, according to the Scriptures, Satan, fallen from heaven, has come down to earth! Here he has planted his standard, and, alas! man has madly taken sides with this fallen-spirit. This is the great battle-field of the universe. Many eyes are looking on, and here must the battle be fought, and here brought to a final close. Is the result doubt-

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ful? No! assuredly—fought against a mountain? or against a sweeping whirlwind?—to contend against his Maker, and against any power, according to the might and terror of the conflict. Valour of Leonidas and his Spartans thinks, brave and heroic must have quailed before a Xerxes. Valour reigns in Washington and his associates, no doubt, even they felt the power of meeting the power in a tented field. But what is Xerxes, or the power of a man, son with the power of the Almighty? “dash whole worlds to atoms when he please.” They fight themselves against an earthly power, formidable that power may be, but less succeed; but there is no Omnipotence. God must overcome his enemies must, and even suppose the patriot must fall before his enemy in the field of battle; yet, if he is animated by this, and it is decorum est, pro patria mori, glorious to die for one’s country, the brave! How delight

ly—for, can an atom contend
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nd?—no more can the sinner
s Maker. War in any form,
power, is a terrible thing; and
night of the enemy is the ter-

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patriot soldier knows that he
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, and he can say, "*Dulce et
patria mori.*" It is sweet and
one's country!—How sleep
delightful to have our memory

cure; he is the Saviour of the world: for without him there is no salvation. His efforts made to direct all eyes to him. John the Baptist, pointing to him, exclaims, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."—"We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son, the Saviour of the world."—"There is none other," says Peter. "No man," says Paul, "can save us, but Jesus Christ which is Jesus Christ." And the testimony of the apostle Peter, that this great truth was well known to the Old Testament saints; "For," says the Lord (Jesus Christ) "I will give all the power that I have, that through him, whosoever will, shall receive remission of sins."—Do not forget the closing testimony of John the Baptist, uttered with so much power, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all into his hands: he that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but shall abide on him."—To crown all, the words of the blessed Saviour, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me,"—again: "If ye believe not that I am the Son of Man, ye shall die in your sins."—In the election, then, Christ being all

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ing all in all, permit me

here to make the following remarks, which I wish to be distinctly remembered :

I. It is the sinner's duty to come to Christ ; and by coming to Christ, I mean believing in him, resting upon him as the sinner's only hope. Now, we say, it is the sinner's duty to come to Christ. Some persons seem to imagine it is left to their own option whether they come or not, but it is not so ; they are commanded to come, and they cannot neglect to come without incurring the guilt of wilful disobedience, and we may add, the guilt of self-destruction. Here is a man shut up in a house which is on fire—a door is thrown open, by which he may make his escape—is it not his duty, by that door, to make his escape?—Here is a person who is dying under the influence of poison received into the system ; an effectual antidote is offered to him ; should he reject that antidote and die, is he not guilty of self-murder ? But,

II. It is the sinner's interest to come to Christ. It is remarkable, how beautifully and closely duty and interest are linked together in the sacred volume. We are commanded to do nothing whatever which is not promotive of our real and best interests. This is emphatically the case in the matter now before us ; for if it be the sinner's duty to come to Christ, as we have shown, it is equally his interest, for there is not a want in the sinner but there is a corresponding fulness in the Saviour, as it is writ-

ten: "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." And again: "Of his fulness," says the apostle, "have we all received, and grace for grace." I repeat it, there is not a want in the sinner but there is a corresponding fulness in our blessed Redeemer. Is the sinner hungry? Let him come to Christ, and he shall be made to partake of the bread of life. Is the sinner thirsty? Let him come to Christ, and he shall be permitted to drink of the wells of salvation. Is the sinner sick? Let him come to Christ, and he shall have life and vigour infused into his soul. Is he naked? Let him come to Christ, and he shall receive a beauteous robe. Is he blind? Let him come to Christ, and he shall have his eyes open to see wondrous things. Is he deaf? Let him come to Christ, and his ears shall be unstopped to hear the voice of uncreated harmony speaking peace to his happy soul. Is the sinner burdened? Let him come to Christ, and his burden shall be taken away. Is the sinner longing for rest? Let him come to Christ, and he shall have sweet repose. Is he trembling under the apprehension of future wrath? Let him come to Christ, and he will find that there is now, therefore, no condemnation to them which are in Christ; for, according to the Scriptures, "Being justified by faith, he shall have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."—Yes, no matter what may be the sinner's wants, or woes,

Christ is suited to his case, in all things—only therefore, let him come to Christ, and he shall be made rich and happy throughout all time, and throughout all eternity. Assuredly, then, it is the sinner's interest to come to Christ. But,

III. The sinner must come to Christ, or he must perish everlastingly. There is no mistake about this matter; for if Christ, in the economy of redemption, be, as we have shown, our all in all, of course those who are without Christ, are without hope; hence the language of the Saviour to his disciples in his last charge, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." This is certainly one of the most awful declarations found in all the Bible; and it assumes a character of peculiar interest and solemnity, when we remember by whom this declaration was originally made, and in what circumstances. By whom was this declaration originally made? Not by an enemy, but by a friend—the tender hearted Jesus—the sinner's best Friend, and the final Judge of all mankind. And when was this declaration of the Saviour made? In his last interview with his disciples, just as he was about to ascend to heaven, there to plead for those for whom he had so recently shed his most precious blood—yes, in these peculiarly solemn and interesting circumstances he said,

“He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.” Ah! my brethren, the case is clear—Christ is the sinner’s only hope, and the sinner must come to him, or perish for ever!

IV. Although it is the sinner’s duty to come to Christ—although it is his interest to come to Christ, and although he must come to Christ or perish everlastingly, yet such is the reigning power of sin, and such the deep depravity of the sinner’s heart, and such the dominion of the world, the flesh, and the devil, that no man can come to Christ except he be divinely drawn. Some stumble at this doctrine, and even reject it; but this, surely, must be from want of due consideration, for it is certainly both a scriptural and wholesome doctrine. Scriptural:—besides our text, which of itself is sufficient to establish the point, we find in the sacred Scriptures numerous passages of similar import. For example, “O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?” Mat. xii. 34. “Without me,” says the Saviour, “ye can do nothing.” John xv. 5. And, says the apostle Paul, “We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves.” Now here you will observe, according to one passage, we are not able *to say*, according to another we are not able *to do*, and according to a third we are not able *to think*, anything truly acceptable,

as of ourselves. These passages are strongly corroborative of our doctrine; but there are others equally strong, equally conclusive in relation to man's helpless and ruined condition without divine aid. I need only remind you of those well known passages which speak of man's deplorable condition in an unrenewed state. Thus: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. ii. 1. Mark, dead in trespasses and sins. Can one who is dead, of himself come forth out of his grave of corruption? Again, "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. viii. 7. How can the sinner of himself convert a heart of enmity into a heart of love? Again, "The heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Eccl. viii. 11. The current of the ocean you cannot resist, nor the strong current of a depraved soul. But why multiply passages of Scripture? The doctrine of the sinner's total depravity and helplessness, is taught in every part of the sacred volume, and is taken for granted in such passages as these: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." "Ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus:"—and, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The doctrine then which we advocate, touching the helplessness of the sinner, in his unrenewed state, is certainly a scriptural doctrine,

and God forbid that we should attempt to explain away our text, which so clearly presents the doctrine.

But we said that the doctrine was not only scriptural, but a wholesome doctrine. Yes, it is the very one which breaks down the pride of the sinner's heart; which causes him to feel that he lies at the mercy of God; and the very thing which, humbling the loftiness and self-sufficiency of his soul, prepares him, and inclines him more earnestly to seek, and more highly to prize help from on high. And I have noticed that the sinner never will come to Christ until he finds that he cannot save himself—never will come to Christ until he finds that he must, positively must, or perish. This is human nature, as it may be seen illustrated in other things.

Here is a man walking along the streets, who is dwelling with great complacency upon the thought that he is worth a million of dollars. One steps up to him and says—"I understand that you owe Mr. A. B. a thousand dollars, and he purposes to exact payment. I am very sorry for you, sir, and am willing to pay the amount." "What do you mean, sir?" replies the millionaire. "Suppose I owe a thousand dollars, I can pay my own debts. Reserve your benevolence for those who may need it." But now, suppose this rich man were a poor man; and suppose, utterly unable to pay his debts, he were

pressed by the sheriff for a claim of a thousand dollars, and the amount he must pay, or be imprisoned. Now, if in these circumstances one who was able and willing to relieve him should kindly offer to pay the amount—"O, sir," methinks he would say, "how could I expect such a favour?" And when assured that it was done with great cheerfulness, how thankfully would he accept the kind offer, and say—"This is kindness indeed! O, sir, I owe you a thousand thanks! I want words to express my sense of the great obligations I am under to you!" The application you understand. Whilst the sinner, in the pride of his heart, imagines that he is rich, and increased in goods, and has need of nothing, he undervalues the provisions of gospel grace—rejects the Saviour; but only let him be brought to feel that he owes a thousand talents and has nothing to pay; let him be made sensible that, spiritually, he is wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and oh! then, how welcome are the provisions of gospel grace, and how dear is the Saviour of lost sinners! This is the very idea presented by Christ himself:—"The whole have no need of a physician," says he, "but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Here is a man who has fallen over a precipice. By his fall he is stunned, and has a limb dislocated. Coming to himself, he finds that he is in an evil case.

The first thought is to rise up and walk away. He accordingly makes the attempt; but a limb is dislocated, and he sinks down to the earth. He is more sensible of the evil of his case, but the spirit of the man is in him, and he yet, it may be, calls for no help. He makes another effort, more vigorous than the first; his limb again gives way, and down he sinks. We will suppose, now, it is bitter cold; it is snowing fast, and the shades of night are drawing on. It flashes upon him—if no one comes to his relief, there he must perish; that spot will be his grave, and the falling snow will be his winding-sheet. Now, at last, urged by the necessity of the case, he cries for help, aye, loudly and earnestly does he now cry for help. Observe, whilst he thought he could help himself, he called for none; but a full sense of his miserable and helpless condition makes him now heartily willing to accept aid from any one who can relieve him. So it is with the sinner; whilst he imagines that his own arm is strong enough, he is not disposed to lean upon the arm of another, and while he thinks he can save himself, he is not likely to prize a Saviour; hence the doctrine which teaches him that he is a poor, helpless sinner, and that he lies at the mercy of God, is a wholesome doctrine. It is this which humbles the pride of the sinner's heart, and which best disposes him to cry with the Syrophenician woman—"Lord, help me!" and

with Peter, sinking in the wave, "Lord, save, or I perish!"

And now, let us pause and contemplate the helpless and deplorable condition of the sinner, as one lying low in the ruins of the fall. He is under the reigning power of sin, and he cannot break the reigning power of sin. He is under the curse of God's righteous law, and he cannot roll away the curse of the law. His soul is unfit for heaven, and he cannot make it fit;—he is bound over to wrath, and he cannot help himself. Aye, he is in a state of nature and of sin, and his heart must be changed or he can never be saved; and of himself he can no more change his own heart than he can roll a mountain, or heave an ocean. Yes, I repeat it, although it is the sinner's duty and interest to come to Christ—and although he must come or perish everlastingly, yet such is the deep depravity of the sinner's heart, such the reigning power of sin in his bosom, and such the dominion of the world, the flesh, and the devil, that no man can come to Christ except he be divinely drawn. O, sinner, believe me, you are lost, ruined, and undone! You lie completely at the mercy of God! and you had better suffer the tortures of martyrdom than do the slightest thing to offend your Maker! Hence the language of the apostle, "Quench not the Spirit." But some one may say, The doctrine of the sinner's helplessness, as

stated, destroys all human responsibility. Not so—we insist upon it, if he perishes it is his own fault. I will explain myself. You are a master; you write a letter, and handing it to your servant, you direct him to take it to a certain person on the other side of the river, and bring you back an answer. After a while he returns, and you ask him, Did you take the letter over the river as I directed you? No, Sir. And why? Master, I could not. And why could you not? Why, master, I went to the river; it was deep and rapid, and there was no bridge, and I could not swim, so I did not go over. Did you call for the ferryman? No, Sir. Then go immediately back, and take the letter over, as I commanded you. Now this, I think, is a correct illustration. There is something about the passing of that river which the servant cannot do, no more than he can roll a mountain, or heave an ocean, and yet you do not excuse him. Even so in this matter. The sinner is utterly unable to come to Christ, or change his own heart of himself. There is, so to speak, a broad and deep river between him and heaven, and the sinner cannot swim; but, thank God, there is, if I may so express myself, a heavenly ferryman on the other side. Let him call upon that ferryman—as it is written, “Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.” And this reminds me

of a remarkable passage in Scripture, "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me." Isa. xxvii. 5. Moreover, it falls in precisely with this language of the Eternal God, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help." Hos. xiii. 9. But this leads to my last general remark :

V. There is a divine drawing ; and, thank God, the doctrine of divine drawing is as clearly revealed as the doctrine of man's helpless and ruined condition by nature. In the sacred volume they are linked together, and what God has joined together let no man put asunder. "No man," says the Saviour, "can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." This language clearly implies that there is such a thing as divine drawing. We may not be able to understand the operation fully, but I believe that a person may be under this system of divine drawing without being fully conscious of it, for oftentimes the influences of the Spirit are as gentle as the dew. There is such a thing as a still small voice, as well as the strong wind which rends the mountains—and the earthquake and the fire. Therefore, although we may not be able to explain the mode of the divine operation, or even recognize it in every case, yet as a fact, or doctrine taught in the Bible, there can be no doubt. "Draw me," says the spouse, in the Song of Solomon, "Draw me, and we

will run after thee." "I have loved you with an everlasting love," says God, in the book of Jeremiah, "therefore with loving kindnesses have I drawn thee." "And I," says the Saviour, "if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me;"—and in Hosea we find this language, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love."

There are various kinds of drawing, both with God and man; and objects are usually drawn in modes and forms suited to the nature of the object drawn. When a log is to be drawn to a certain place, a chain is fastened to it, and by the application of physical force, it is drawn to the place intended. I hold in my hand a leaden ball, I let it go, and it falls to the ground, drawn by the power of gravitation, drawn by the operation of a certain law impressed upon inanimate matter by the Creator. Again: This earth moves round the sun once in every twelve months; and how is this accomplished? It is drawn around, in its orbit, by the joint action of two forces, the centripetal and centrifugal. Thus, we see, that inanimate objects are moved, or drawn, by the application of physical force, and the operation of certain general laws of nature. But man is not inanimate matter; he is a moral and intellectual being; he has a mind, a will, a conscience, and a heart, and he is drawn by another set of means and instrumentalities; he has an under-

standing, and he can feel the power of an argument; he has a conscience, and he can feel the force of an appeal; moreover, he has certain affections and sensibilities, and these can be wrought upon in various ways; and hence it is written, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love." I have seen men going from one place to another, and even hastening to distant and sickly climes, drawn by a love of gain. I have seen wives following their husbands, as it were, all the world over, drawn by affection and a sense of duty; and I have seen persons hurrying away to the post of danger—braving the fury and storm of battle, led on by patriotism, and sometimes purely by ambition, or a desire to twine laurels around their brow. Here is a crowd gathered together in the house of God this day—no physical force was applied, and yet, here they are, drawn as effectually as if some irresistible physical force had been brought to bear upon them. Some drawn by a sense of duty, to worship God. Some drawn by curiosity—they heard that there was a religious excitement in the place, a revival of religion—and moreover, that a stranger was expected to preach. Their curiosity was excited, and it has succeeded in bringing them here!—And some are present, drawn, as I hope, by a secret desire to receive spiritual benefit. They have been, it may be, under serious impressions for a long time. They desire the salvation of

their souls, and having heard that, within a few days past, several persons have been hopefully converted here, they have come, if peradventure, they may receive the same blessing. Well, they are here, and as effectually drawn as the log spoken of, or the leaden ball to the surface of the earth by the power of gravitation, or the earth around the sun by the action of the two forces already mentioned:—each object drawn, according to its own nature, and in its own way. There is a case of divine drawing in the Scriptures which furnishes a good illustration of the case before us—I refer to the case of the patriarch Jacob, drawn down into Egypt. If, when quietly and pleasantly settled in the land of Canaan, some one had said, Jacob, you must go down into Egypt, methinks he would have promptly said, Not I!—Here are my possessions; my flocks and my herds; my children and my grandchildren, are also with me; and here, too, is the grave of Machpelah; here will I live and die, and here will I be gathered unto my fathers. And yet, after all, he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there, and died there—and no violence was done to his will. And how was this brought about? By a remarkable chain of providences. The patriarch had twelve sons—one, named Joseph, was loved more than they all; and the patriarch made him a coat of many colours, and his brethren envied him, and could not speak peace-

ably unto him; and Joseph dreamed certain dreams, and told them unto his brethren, and they hated him still more on account of his dreams;—and they conspired against him, and sold him to certain Midianite merchantmen, who carried him down into Egypt; and there, after many wonderful events, Joseph was made governor over all the land of Egypt;—and there was a famine in the land, and it spread far and wide, and reached the land of Canaan where Jacob was. Hearing that there was corn in Egypt, he sent his sons down into Egypt to obtain supplies—again he sent them, and when they returned the second time, they brought strange tidings to the patriarch's ears, saying, "Thy son Joseph is alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: and Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die." And accordingly he hastened and went down into Egypt; and sure I am, no violence was done to his will. He never went to any place more cheerfully in all his life; and, verily, nothing but chains, and strong chains, could have prevented him from going down into Egypt. A powerful magnet was there! The patriarch's

long-lost, beloved Joseph was there, and his heart yearned toward his darling child. He longed to see and embrace him once more; all his reluctance to going down into Egypt is removed, and he is fully set upon going now. And Israel said, "It is enough, Joseph my son is yet alive, I will go and see him before I die." Thus, without any violence done to his will, he was drawn down into Egypt with cords of a man, with bands of love. And thus sinners are drawn to Christ. They are, it may be, in the midst of worldly enjoyments and possessions, and are quietly settled upon their lees. They have no concern about their souls, nor thought of eternity. In the midst of these scenes of worldly contentment, there comes a famine in the land. Afflictions come, heavy, grievous afflictions come; they meet with this loss, and that disappointment; this darling child is taken away, and that beloved companion is laid in the grave. Ah! the world now begins to lose its charm, and earthly sources of enjoyment are drying up; this child of affliction is brought to see the vanity of the world, the emptiness and insufficiency of all things here below, and the importance of securing a portion better than any thing the world can give. In these circumstances, the soul, by the power of the Spirit, is waked up to the high claims of God and eternity; and thus, affliction is made instrumental in drawing the soul away from the

vanities of the world, and causing it to rest upon Christ as the source of all consolation, and all hope. O how many in this way have sought comfort in religion, and in religion have found it! "It is good for me," says the Psalmist, "that I have been afflicted; for, before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now have I kept thy law." The famine in the land of Canaan was sore, but it brought about the joy of meeting with Joseph, which joy the patriarch would probably never have had on earth, had there been no famine in the land. So some are by affliction brought to Christ, and made happy in his love, who, without such affliction, had in all probability perished in their sin. O how many in the bright realms of bliss, will, upon reviewing the scenes of this lower state, exclaim with gratitude and joy, "Sweet affliction! blessed affliction! which weaned my heart from the world, and led me to my Saviour and my God!"

But other means are also made effectual by the Spirit of God in bringing about the same blessed result. The sinner, perhaps by the instrumentality of some awakening sermon, or some religious book, or some friendly letter, or some zealous friend, or it may be, some sacramental or death-bed scene, is brought, like the Psalmist, to think upon his ways, and turn his feet to the divine testimonies. His understanding is enlightened, and he is brought to see the

reasonableness of the claims of his Maker, and the value of his own soul. His conscience is troubled, and he is brought to see that he is a sinner, and justly condemned by God's righteous law. Moreover, he has a heart, and appeals have been made to it, drawn from the goodness of God shown in ten thousand things, and the love of Christ in dying for our lost and ruined race. And, it may be, the law has spoken out its terrors in thunder to the soul. In short, arguments, appeals, motives, and considerations of various kinds, are brought to bear upon the man with great power. The more he thinks, the more anxious he becomes. He sees that he has sinned against a holy God; that he has broken God's righteous law, and has incurred its dreadful penalty; that he can make no atonement for his sins; and that, without a Saviour, he must perish for ever. In these circumstances, Christ is held out to him in the gospel, as one who is both able and willing to save all that will come unto him. Light flows in upon the sinner's mind, his heart is touched by the Spirit of God, his will is subdued, and he is both persuaded and enabled to embrace Jesus Christ as he is freely offered in the gospel. No violence is done to the sinner's will. Interest, duty, love, all lead him to the feet of his blessed Saviour, whilst he cries out—"Lord, save, or I perish!"—"Here, Lord, I give myself away, 'tis all that I can do." Or,

“Welcome, welcome, dear Redeemer,
Welcome to this heart of mine:
Lord, I make a full surrender,
Every power and thought be thine,
Thine entirely—
Through eternal ages thine.”

Thus the sinner is drawn, sweetly, powerfully, effectually drawn to Christ. And, so far from any violence having been done to his will, his whole heart is in the matter. He goes to Christ as freely, and cheerfully, and joyfully as a hungry man goes to a banquet, or a thirsty man to a pool of water; or rather, as the manslayer into the city of refuge—or he that is exposed to the peltings of a pitiless storm enters a place of shelter.

And now, my dear, unconverted friends, forget not the things which you have heard this evening. Remember, it is your duty to come to Christ; it is your interest to come to Christ; and you absolutely must come to Christ, or you must perish for ever. And O, remember, that whilst these things are so, yet, such is the deep depravity of the sinner's heart, and such the reigning power of sin, and such the dominion of the world, the flesh, and the devil, that no man can come to Christ unless he be divinely drawn. O, you who are now under divine influences—you who are under conviction of sin, and tremble for the salvation of your souls—and you who are sensible that the world can-

not make you happy, and who sigh for something better than the world can give, remember you are now under the influence of a divine drawing; beware how you fight against your convictions; beware how you trifle with your serious impressions; beware how you resist these heavenly drawings, lest they cease, and you be left to yourselves—and what then? Your case becomes hopeless! you are lost to all eternity! O, quench not the Spirit! Beware, lest, grieving the Spirit, he cease to move upon your heart, and you become hardened. And O, think what it is to be hardened! It is to have all the moral and religious sensibilities of the soul deadened. It is to become reckless and unconcerned. It is to be habitually in such a frame of mind that there are no compunctions for the past, no apprehensions for the future—deaf to all the calls of mercy, stupid under all the means of grace. It is to be habitually in such a frame of mind, that all promises and threatenings are alike disregarded, and all motives and appeals equally unavailing. As the dead man feels not the burning of the coal lodged in his bosom, nor the flinty rock the softening influences of the showers of heaven, even so it is with him whose heart is hardened. He may be in the sanctuary, but the most pungent discourses make no impression. He may witness sacramental scenes, but they inspire no solemnity—

even funeral rites and the burial of the dead affect him not. Spread before him the glories of heaven, and he is not allured; point him to the torments of the damned, and he is not alarmed. Lead him to Calvary, and talk to him about the love of Jesus and his dying agonies, and he is as insensible as steel. Friends may entreat, but he heeds not; ministers may warn, but he repents not. Others may feel, but he feels not; others may weep, but he weeps not. He is hard as rock; or say,

“ ————— Some alarming shock of fate
Strikes through his wounded heart,
The sudden dread! another moment, and alas!
—— where past the shaft no trace is found,
As from the wing no sear the sky retains,
The parted wave, no furrow from the keel.”

The rock may be rived, but it is rock still: it may be broken into a thousand fragments, but there is no softening yet. And so it is with the sinner, when, the drawings of heaven resisted and the Spirit quenched, the sinner is left to himself and becomes incorrigible and hardened—past feeling and past hope! Let me be poor, let me be a bondman, let me be a beggar, but let me not, given up of the Spirit, be a hardened sinner! O my God, cast me not away from thy presence, neither take thine holy Spirit from me. Fellow sinner, take care what you do just now. You are in solemn cir-

cumstances, and great interests are at stake! Many of you are under the influence of divine drawings now, and some, perhaps, who are not fully aware of it. O remember

“God’s Spirit will not always strive
With hardened self-destroying men;
You who persist his love to grieve
May never hear his voice again!”

O then, let me exhort you, one and all, to make light of sacred things no more; they are too serious to be trifled with. Heaven and hell—eternal life and eternal death! What more rousing themes can be presented to the mind of man? O, if any of you have never yet come to Christ, let me entreat you to come this day—put off the great concern no longer. It is dangerous to delay. Your day of grace may close when you least expect it. Only one sin more, and the sentence may go forth against you, “Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone!” Yes, only one sin more, and divine drawings, in your case, may cease for ever! Here is a beam extending over a precipice, a man may take several steps upon that beam, but there is one point upon which if he steps, he is gone! A cord may sustain a certain weight—add one ounce to that weight and the cord breaks! O, then, beware how you take another step in the road to death! beware how you add another sin to those

already committed! and beware how you slight this, which may be your last—last call! Fellow man, eternity is at the door. You need a Saviour. There are influences now in operation to draw you to this Saviour. For heaven's sake—for your dear soul's sake, resist not these influences. O, yield, and may you this day find Christ precious to your soul—even the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely! Amen.

SERMON XI.

VAIN EXCUSES.

And they all with one consent began to make excuse.—LUKE xiv. 18.

WHY, my brethren, are there so few real Christians amongst us? The fact I assume, for I suppose it will not be denied. Should the angel of death pass through the length and breadth of our land, and sweep into the grave all the careless, and all the prayerless; and return and sweep into the grave all the intemperate and all the profane; and return and take away every scoffer, and every hypocrite—and return, in short, and take away every impenitent and unrenewed sinner, what silence would reign in our streets! what solitude would exist

in our dwellings! and how thin would be this congregation! Why this—why so few real Christians? Doubtless there are many reasons; such as pride, worldly-mindedness, and a want of thought; but certainly one reason is this, a self-justifying spirit, prompting the impenitent to make vain excuses. This morning I design to examine some of the excuses which are commonly urged by the unconverted, for neglecting to obey the gospel call. Before I take them up, however, I would observe, that there is a general evidence against their soundness, arising from some remarkable circumstances:—their number—their easy relinquishment—and the representation which our Saviour gives of them in the parable whence we have derived our text. Their number: When a person is asked to do a thing which he does not choose to do, and yet desires to keep up fair appearances, he is very apt to make a great many excuses, as if he would make up in number what is wanting in the value of his excuses. Precisely so with regard to the sinner. Here is an unconverted man, and I say to him, My dear sir, I am astonished that a man of your good sense should neglect the salvation of your soul. Certainly you must admit it to be a matter of great importance, why then do you neglect it? He makes one excuse; before he allows me time to meet that excuse, he abandons it for another, and that for another; and thus he goes on, re-

treating, through the whole round of his excuses. This, I say, is a very suspicious circumstance: if that man had a single excuse, which he really believed to be substantial, would he not hold it fast? but not having any in which he has much confidence, he adds one to another, as if, as already said, he would make up in number what is wanting in the value of his excuses. Again: Here is another man; he has twenty reasons for neglecting to obey the gospel call. Let some alarming disease seize upon him, and he forgets one half of them—let death look him in the face, he forgets the other half! O, these shadowy excuses! If they cannot stand in the presence of disease and death, how can they stand in the presence of the final Judge of all mankind?

But the representation which our Saviour gives of them, is conclusive against the soundness of all the sinner's excuses. A certain man, says he, made a great supper, and sent his servant, at supper-time, to say to them that were bidden, "Come, for all things are now ready: and they all, with one consent, began to make excuse." And pray, what were these excuses? "The first said, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused." Observe! He was invited to come at supper-time! Now supper-time I should think rather an indifferent time to see the ground; and yet no time but supper time will

suit him to see the ground. "And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee, have me excused." Now, if he had bought the oxen, the bargain was closed—at any rate, any planter, any man in his senses, knows full well that supper-time is not the best time to prove oxen—yet no time can he fix upon to prove these oxen but supper-time. "And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." Where was the man invited to go—to a funeral? No! To hear a dull lecture? No! Where then? To a feast! And where could a new-married couple go with greater propriety, than to a feast? And yet this is his excuse—"I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." This is a very remarkable parable. It was uttered by our Lord, who knew what was in man; and knew, full well, how to represent the true character of the sinner's excuses, and here he does it to the life and admiration, in this truly remarkable parable. And now, God helping me, I will endeavour this morning to show that the excuses commonly urged by the sinner for neglecting to obey the gospel call, are not a whit better than they are represented to be in this, as I have said, truly remarkable parable.

I. The Bible is so full of mystery I cannot understand it.—The Bible so full of mystery! Just as if the Bible was nothing in the

world but a bundle of riddles! No plain doctrine, no plain precept, no plain promise, no plain threatening—nothing plain! Is this ingenuous? Is this true? The Bible says, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” Is not this plain? The Bible says, “He that believeth not shall be damned.” Would the sinner wish anything plainer than this? The Bible says, “It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even the chief of sinners.” Now this is not only remarkably beautiful, but it is remarkably plain; even the child of six years of age can understand it perfectly well; and yet the man says, the Bible is so full of mystery I cannot understand it! Ah! we all see it clearly. It amounts to this: I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it at supper-time. But another comes forward with this excuse,

II. Religion is a gloomy thing, it has no charms for me.—Thank God, there are many, both in heaven and earth, who think very differently. I never heard that religion ever abridged one’s happiness in health, or saddened one’s heart in sickness, or lay heavy upon one’s soul in death. But I think that I have heard that the want of religion extorted a cry of agony from the dying sinner. Religion a gloomy thing!—has no charms for you! Look

at the young convert, how his eyes sparkle!
how every feature beams with joy! Hark,
how his tongue breaks out in songs of praise:

“When God revealed his gracious name,
And changed my mournful state,
My rapture seemed a pleasing dream
The grace appeared so great!

“Great is the work, my neighbours cried,
And owned the power divine;
Great is the work, my heart replied,
And be the glory thine!”

But suppose there be no rapture, the young convert has a sweet complacency in Christ—a heavenly calm, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and which he would not exchange for “all that the world calls good or great.” It must be so, for what does religion do for us? It gives us a scriptural assurance that our sins are all forgiven for Jesus’ sake. Is there anything in this to sadden the heart? It gives us the scriptural assurance that the great God of the universe is our reconciled God and Father in Christ. Is there anything in this to damp the warm feelings of the soul? It gives us, moreover, the blessed assurance that heaven is our home; that angels are to be our future companions; nay, that we ourselves are to be as angels in the world to come. I confess I can see nothing in this to sink the spirits, or spread anything

like gloom over the mind. Ah! but you say, If I become a Christian I shall have to give up all the pleasures of the world. You are called upon to give up no pleasures that are really innocent; and can you wish to indulge in those which are not? Here also it must be remembered, that true religion is a renovating principle. It changes the heart—the whole current of the soul, so that a person even in fashionable life, or in the full indulgence of sin of any kind, when soundly converted, can give up sinful pleasures without a sigh, and take up religious duties with real joy; for, says the Saviour, “My yoke is easy and my burden is light.” And again, “There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God’s sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.” So that, in relation to real pleasure, as well as in relation to other matters, it may truly be said, “Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come.” Yes, it is even so, and the verdict of thousands and millions, is this:

“’Tis religion that must give
Sweetest pleasures whilst we live:
’Tis religion must supply
Solid comfort when we die.”

O, worldlings! believe me, you are wrong! You are seeking happiness in the world. It is but a beggarly portion for an immortal soul. Has it ever yet made you happy? No! and it never will, it never can. And let these words sink down into your ears—you will never know what true happiness is until you are converted; and, if never converted, you will never know it, world without end. But suppose that religion did make one sad and gloomy on earth (which we utterly deny) would it not be better, after all, to be a sad and gloomy child of God than a thoughtless and merry child of the devil? Would it not be better to go to heaven in a thorny way, than to go to hell in a way all strewed with flowers? Then what becomes of the second excuse? It amounts to this—I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them at supper-time.

III. A third excuse is this: If I am elected to be saved I shall be saved, do what I will; and if not, I cannot, do what I may. This is the sheet-anchor of many, their strong-hold, that upon which they are disposed to rest with more confidence perhaps than any other; and after all, if I mistake not, it amounts to this: I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. It is but an excuse, and not good, for two reasons—(1.) Because it involves an absurdity; and, (2.) Because it is not acted upon in cases exactly similar.

(1.) It involves an absurdity, for it amounts to this: What is to come to pass will come to pass, whether we have any agency in the matter or not. Now the absurdity lies here—it supposes the accomplishment of an event, without the very means by which the event is to be accomplished. As if I should say, If I am to go to London, why, certainly, I shall go to London, whether I embark on board of a vessel or not; or, if we are to have a pleasant day to-morrow, assuredly we shall have a pleasant day to-morrow, whether the sun rises or not. Absurdity, you perceive, is stamped upon the face of the thing. Those who reach London, must pass over the ocean, and if there be a pleasant day to-morrow, the sun must rise. So those who are elected to everlasting salvation, as the *end*, must be prepared for it by the sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, as the necessary *means* for the attainment of that end. God has connected the end and the means, and what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

(2.) The excuse urged is not a good one, because it is not acted upon in cases very similar. Does this planter say—If I am to have a crop this year, I shall have a crop this year, whether I cultivate my grounds or not. I suspect he does not say this. Does this other man say—If I am to be rich, I shall be rich whether I make any effort or not. Certainly he does

not say so. Does the sick man say—If I am to get well, I shall get well whether I take any medicine or not. O no! he does not say so; and yet all these might say so, for I have heard of grounds producing crops without any cultivation; and I have heard of persons becoming rich without any effort. Aye, and I have heard of sick persons getting well without any medicine, but never have I heard of man or woman finding the straight gate without seeking it, or getting into the narrow way without effort. And here I would remark, that there is a passage of Scripture just in point. Job, speaking of man's temporal life, or the life of the body, says, "His days are determined, the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." Job xiv. 5. Here we are taught that the life of man is in God's hand; that according to the divine purpose, some die young, and some are elected to old age. In this matter God acts as a sovereign God, and so also in the other case, and

"Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives."

And what then, does the sick man say? My days are determined, I will send for no physician; the number of my months is with him; I will take no medicine; he has appointed the bounds of my life, that I cannot pass, I will therefore do nothing; if I am to die of this

disease, I must die, do what I will; and if not, I cannot, do what I may. Does he say this? No! he does not, but rather he reasons thus: I know that God, as an infinite being, must know all things, and of course must know the day of my death; but I know also, and I have frequently observed, that there is a connexion between the means and the end—I have seen persons dying, evidently for want of medical aid, and I have seen some persons at the point of death, restored to health, evidently by medical skill. This is enough for me; secret things belong unto God. I see that in all things there is a manifest and close connexion between the means and the end. This is sufficient.—Now this is all perfectly rational and right in the one case, why should it not be acted upon in the other. The grand reason I suspect is this: the sinner had rather cavil, than repent—much rather make excuse, than give up sin. But while I am upon the subject of election, or the decrees of God, take a Jewish story:—"Rabbi Hillel sat in the chair of Moses; his fame for wisdom and sanctity was spread far and wide. If the Messiah were known to be upon the earth, Rabbi Hillel would have been taken for the Messiah; but every man at his best estate is altogether vanity. Rabbi Hillel wished to understand the mystery of the divine decrees. To prepare himself for meditation so deep and profound, he spent two days in fasting and in

prayer; on the third, he ascended the top of Mount Carmel; there his gigantic mind endeavoured to grasp the mighty theme, but his thoughts rolled back upon his breast like stones from the top of Gerizim. At length, wearied by his fruitless inquiries, by chance he turned his eye toward a spot of earth where something appeared to be moving. It was a mole, that having heard that there was such a thing as light, and forgetting the weakness of its own organs of vision, longed to look upon the sun in all its brightness and glory. Scarcely, however, had he left his subterranean abode, when, dazzled by the overwhelming effulgence of the sun, he wished himself back again; but, before he could effect his retreat, an eagle hovering over, flew down, seized the mole with her talons and flew over the valley of the son of Hinnom. 'Blessed be the God of my fathers,' exclaimed Rabbi Hillel, as he beheld the scene that passed before his eyes—'Blessed be the God of my fathers, who by this little incident has taught his servant wisdom—not to be too anxious to explore mysteries which are too deep for human comprehension.' "

My brethren, listen! The grand inquiry for such creatures as we are, is, not whether we can understand all parts of the scheme of redemption, but whether there is such a scheme, whereby the sinner may be saved. Not whether two or three doctrines in the Bible are

hard to be understood, but whether the Bible itself, which contains these doctrines, be the word of God? Not whether we are of the elect or reprobate, but whether we are sinners, and need the salvation of Christ? For it is remarkable, the very same Bible which asserts the sovereignty of God, also asserts the free agency of man. The very same Bible which says—whom God foreknew, them he also predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, also says—“Whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life freely.” Prying into deep mysteries may do us as much injury as gazing upon the sun did the mole, whose organs of vision could not bear the splendours of that bright orb of day. Let us, then, never perplex ourselves with those things which are too deep for us to fathom; but let us bless God that, according to the Scriptures, “It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even the chief.” Yes, instead of perplexing ourselves with things too high and deep for us, let us endeavour by grace divine to obtain an experimental knowledge of those plainer doctrines which are able to make us wise unto salvation; able to bring us to the world of light and glory, where we shall no more complain of intellectual darkness, for there shall be no night there! But another excuse frequently urged is this:

IV. Professors of religion are no better than other persons.—Now this is either true, or it is not true. If true, these professors of religion are not Christians; for, if Christians, they must have the Spirit of Christ; and who will say that a man may have the Spirit of Christ and yet be no better than those who have not? But even admit that professors of religion are no better than other people; suppose they are all a set of hypocrites, not excepting your own mother, what of that? Will that make the doctrines of the Bible less true, the precepts less binding, the promises less encouraging, or the threatenings less alarming? Suppose they are all hypocritical, hollow-hearted professors, will that blot out this passage of Scripture, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish:” Or, this, “He that believeth not, shall be damned:” Or this, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” You stumble at the inconsistent walk of professors of religion; and alas, that you should have so much occasion! but their sins cannot justify you in the day of accounts: even their righteousness cannot do it—how much less their sins. You talk about the inconsistent walk of professors of religion, and did not the Saviour predict the very thing? “Wo to the world because of offences,” says he, “it must needs be that offences come, but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh.”

Leave them in the hands of God, he will by no means suffer them to go unpunished; but, if you be a sinner too—dying in that state, is there not to be a reckoning with you also? It is admitted that inconsistent, hollow-hearted professors of religion are stumblingblocks in the way of salvation; but if there were stumblingblocks in your way to a golden mine, would those stumblingblocks keep you from rushing to that golden mine? And is not the salvation of your precious soul worth infinitely more than all the treasures of a golden mine? Ah! my friend, believe me, your excuse is not a good one. It amounts to this—I have bought a piece of ground, and must needs go and see it, at supper-time! But

V. A fifth excuse is this: “There are so many different denominations of Christians, I do not know which is the right one.”—So many different denominations! There are, perhaps, one hundred more than you ever dreamed of, unless you have read largely upon the subject—and what of that? Does that make your soul less valuable, or a Saviour less needful, or heaven less glorious, or hell less terrible, or eternity less awful? So many different denominations! And do not most of them agree in essential matters? The apostle says, “Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.” Mark, he does not say, grace be with all them that think alike in every matter—

for however desirable this may be, it is by no means essential to salvation—but “grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.” And again, he says, “As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God;” that is, as many as bring forth the fruits of a new and regenerate nature, peace be upon them.) So many different denominations of Christians! They are like the different colours which constitute the beauteous rainbow upon the body of the dark cloud—like the different parts in music, the tenor and the counter, the treble and the base—like the radii of a circle of which Jesus Christ is the centre, and the nearer they come to the centre, the nearer they come to each other!—Or rather, may I not say, that they are like the different companies which compose the grand army in time of war. Suppose the powers of Europe should combine against the liberties of our beloved country; and, sending over their multitudinous and well disciplined troops, should threaten to sweep away our republican institutions. The fact is announced and war proclaimed by our federal government—what a marshalling of the forces for battle! On every hand you hear the sound of the heart-stirring drum, and the trumpet of war, calling the freemen of America to the tented field. What a scene is presented! See, on yonder mountain wave, there floats the gallant navy

of my country, prepared with her thunder to repel the invading foe, or sink into the ocean's depths! And see, on the land, how they come, how they crowd in from all parts of this great confederacy!—Are they all horsemen, are they all infantry, are they all riflemen, are they all artillerists? Have they all the same weapons of war, have they all the same uniform? What an endless variety prevails, and yet what unity. This great army of American patriots is composed of many, very many companies. Each company has its own officers, its own regimentals, its own weapons of war, and its own mode of warfare; aye, and each company has its own little flag, too. But see! the star spangled banner of my country waves over them all! Yes, the star spangled banner of my country waves over yonder gallant navy, upon the mountain wave, prepared to repel the invading foe, or sink into the ocean's depths! The star spangled banner of my country waves over the land army in all its variety, prepared to repel the invading foe, or bite the earth in death! Even so, what are the different denominations of real Christians, but the different companies which compose the grand army of Immanuel, the sacramental host of God's elect? Each denomination, so to speak, may have its own officers, regimentals, and weapons of war; aye, and each may have its own little flag, too. But, mark!

the blood-stained banner of the cross—the bond of union for every pious heart, waves over them all! Let the sinner, then, do what he ought to have done long time ago; let him repent of his sins, and yield his heart to the blessed Redeemer; and, although not falling precisely into our ranks, I for one, (and I am sure I speak the sentiments of very many,) I for one, can most cordially give him the right hand of fellowship, and say, Is Christ precious to your soul? Does his banner wave over you? God speed thee, my brother, in thy holy warfare! God speed thee in thy journey to the skies! Press on! We differ in some things, but we agree in all essential matters—we differ in some things, but we are all members of the same household of faith, bought with the same precious blood, sanctified by the same Divine Spirit, and all passing through one beauteous gate to one eternal home! Press on, my brother, we shall soon meet in heaven, and there see eye to eye; shall soon meet in our own Father's house above, and there salute each other as fellow immortals, and as brethren redeemed! And now what has become of the excuse about so many different denominations? It has vanished into air, it is frivolous, it amounts to this: "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them" at supper-time! I pray thee have me excused. In other words, it speaks this language—I don't choose to go!

But the same person, it may be, brings forward this excuse,

VI. "What harm have I done? I do not think that I am any great sinner. I have injured no man. I have defrauded no man. I have murdered no man. I am not covetous, I am not profane, I am not a gambler, nor a drunkard. I pay all my just debts; I am kind to the poor; I go to church; and I subscribe to many of the benevolent and charitable institutions of the day." Well, be it so. Suppose you are what the world calls a good kind of a moral man; and do you ask what harm have you done, and whom have you injured? You have failed to love the Lord your God; and is this no harm? You have turned your back upon a dying Saviour, and have even trampled upon his precious blood; and is this no harm? You have grieved the Spirit of God, and it may be, have broken many solemn vows; and is this no harm? You have not remembered the Sabbath day, to keep it holy; you have not improved your great privileges; you have wasted much of our precious time; you have indulged evil thoughts, harboured rebellious feelings, encouraged improper desires—and is this no harm? You have sinned against light and against love: against the law and against the gospel: against the admonitions of God's word, the strivings of the Divine Spirit, and against the remonstrances of your

own conscience. You are guilty of sins of omission and of commission; sins of thought, of word, and deed, and that times and ways without number. In short, the charge brought against Belshazzar, on the very night in which he was slain, may be brought against you: "The God in whose hands thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified." And now, upon thy soul the inscription is written—"Tekel, thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting." And yet do you say, What harm have I done, and whom have I injured? O, could you see your sins as God sees them, or as they are likely to come rolling over your soul in a dying hour, or certainly in the great judgment-day, methinks, instead of saying, What harm have I done, and whom have I injured—you would say, Innumerable evils have compassed me about; my sins have gone over my head as a cloud; they are a burden too heavy for me; and with the publican you would cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." O, remember that it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." And whilst you are relying upon your own righteousness, remember also the words of the holy apostle, "Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Your excuse, then, is a vain one; it will not stand. Be assured, God, your

Judge, will not receive it. It is one of those refuges of lies spoken of in the Scriptures which the hail shall sweep away. Then give it up, why should you hold fast to an excuse which you know to be not a good one? But the excuses of the sinner are not yet exhausted, for he says,

VII. "God is too merciful to punish sinners."

Now to determine this we must have recourse not to our own imaginations, but to the sacred volume; for, aside from the Scriptures, we would literally know nothing at all about such matters. The Bible then—the blessed Bible!

"This is the judge that ends the strife, where wit and reason fail." And now, to determine

the case before us, we need to inquire only in relation to two things: (1.) What has God said?

and (2.) What has God done?—(1.) What has

God said? He has said, it is true, that he is long-suffering, abundant in goodness and in truth—but he has also said, that he will by no means clear the guilty. He has said, it is true,

that he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but he has also said, if the wicked turn not, he will whet his sword, and his hand will take hold on vengeance. He has said

many things most consoling to the penitent and broken-hearted sinner, but upon all others he denounces terrible things. "Wo," says he,

"to the wicked, it shall be ill with him."

And again, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." And again, "He that be-

ing often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." Declarations like these, you know, my dear friends, are very common in the sacred volume, and you cannot believe they were intended to be mere vain words. Let the sinner then seriously consider what God has said, and what is before him. God is merciful. Yes, and we are glad to add, he is rich in mercy—his mercy is over all his works, and endureth for ever; but remember also, "God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent." "Has he said it, and shall he not do it?" "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven!" (2.) But what has God done? Expelling rebel angels from heaven, he cast them down to hell! Driving fallen man from paradise, he subjected him to death, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. The antediluvians were God's creatures, and yet being sinners, the flood came and swept them all away. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were God's creatures, and yet on account of their sins, you know very well what befel them. The Lord rained upon them fire and brimstone out of heaven; and, according to the apostle, they were set forth as examples, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Let not the sinner then, who continues in sin, expect to escape the righteous judgment of Almighty God, for it is written, "Though

hand join in hand yet shall not the wicked go unpunished." And again—"Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." There is a way, thank God, in which salvation may come to the sinner, as a flowing stream. Through the great atoning sacrifice of Christ, God can pardon the repenting sinner, and yet maintain the honours of his throne; but, let the sinner reject the plan of salvation proposed in the gospel, and he rejects mercy herself—and mercy thus scorned and rejected, will herself grasp the sword, and turn executioner. The wrath of the Lamb! O who can bear it! But another comes forward and says,

VIII. "Really, sir, I have not time to attend to the matter."—And what was time chiefly given for, but to prepare for eternity. Here is a servant sent upon an important errand, but, gathering flowers and pebbles by the way, he lingers and says, I have not time to go upon the errand. Here is a planter; the time for putting his seed into the ground is come, but his grounds are not ploughed, nor are his fences up; and, sporting with his hounds, or amusing himself in his garden, he pleads he has not time to sow his fields. Not time! You have time to attend to your bodies—why not time to attend to your souls? "O! Mr. Ryland, I have not time to attend to such matters." Observe, this was the language of a

certain member of Congress to the chaplain of Congress, at the time the man of God urged him to attend to the great interests of his undying soul. "O! sir," said he, "I have not time to attend to such matters." Men of the world, listen! This member of Congress was a lawyer. He made, as I am told, twenty thousand dollars a year by his practice as a lawyer. He was a senator—one of the most brilliant stars which ever coruscated in the senate chamber. Moreover he was an orator, a finished orator, if there ever was one in this land of ours. His tongue was the tongue of the learned, it dropped manna; persuasion dwelt upon his lips. All who heard him were charmed with his silver-toned voice, and the heart-stirring strains of his enrapturing eloquence. When it was known that he was to speak in the senate chamber, it was difficult to keep a quorum in the other house; and on a certain occasion, when he had made a most brilliant speech on the Missouri question, John Randolph, (certainly a judge of eloquence, if of nothing else)—yes, John Randolph, in perfect admiration exclaimed, "I had rather be the author of that speech than Emperor of all the Russias." This is the man, the lawyer, the statesman—the great and brilliant man, who, when urged to take care of his soul, replied, "O, Mr. Ryland, I have not time to attend to such matters." Ah

me! "what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!" This very man, only a few weeks after, was shrouded and laid in the grave! And now, as he is sinking in the cold embrace of death, the same chaplain comes to his bed-side, and for the last time admonishes him to take care of his soul. What does he now say? "O, Mr. Ryland, the world has ruined me!" Remember, I do not draw aside the curtain; I will not pronounce concerning his doom; but on the supposition that his last words were true, "the world has ruined me!" on that supposition, where is he now? In the dark world of wo! And what is it to him, this moment, that he was once able to amass twenty thousand dollars a year by his practice as a lawyer? Alas! now he has not silver and gold enough to purchase one poor drop of water to cool his tongue tormented in penal flames! And what is it to him, this moment, that he was once the most brilliant star that ever glittered in the senate chamber of the United States! Alas! this star is fallen! Its brilliancy is quenched in the gloom of the pit that has no bottom! And what is it to him now, that once his tongue was the tongue of the learned; that it dropped manna; that persuasion dwelt upon his lips, and that all who heard him were charmed with the strains of his surpassing eloquence. Does he speak? It is in groans of anguish, and shrieks of despair—

methinks he cries out in the agony of a lost soul, "I have lost my day, I have lost my soul! The harvest is passed, the summer is ended, and I am not saved!" You have not time to attend to your spiritual interests! What says the Saviour, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." This is to be sought as an object of the first importance, and in the first place; and for this, a good reason is assigned in another place, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

IX. "I know that religion is important: I do not intend to neglect it, but there is time enough yet."—You admit that religion is important, and yet you seem disposed to attend to anything and everything else first! You admit that religion is important; we are pleased that you make this admission, but better proof of your sense of its importance would give us more pleasure still. But you say, you do not intend to neglect it. Are you not mistaken? Let us test this matter. Is it your purpose to attend to it this day, to-morrow, the next week, the next month, or the next year? No, you say, you have not exactly formed any resolution of this kind. Then it seems you are quite reconciled to the idea of neglecting it at least for one day, one month, and even for one year! O, there is something awful in this! Something to make one shudder! It speaks

this language: Terrible as the loss of the soul is, I am willing to expose myself to the peril of it, for at least one year more! But you say, you have time enough yet. What if you should die this night! And what security have you that you shall not?—I am free to confess I do not think it likely that you will die to-night, but it is quite possible, and the bare possibility of your dying in your present state, this night, surely it is enough to take away sleep from your eyes, and slumber from your eyelids! I recollect when I was yet unconverted. I was sometimes afraid to go to sleep at night, lest I might never wake up in this world any more! And I recollect making a remark of this kind one evening at the house of a friend in Texas, some years ago, and it was blessed to the hopeful conversion of one precious soul. Suppose you think upon the matter; it may, by grace divine, be the means of saving you from going down to the pit. Remember, your breath is in your nostrils, and God may stop that breath any moment. But why do you think that there is time enough yet? Are you young? Some younger than you are now sleeping in their graves. Are you in strong health? Ah, me! some not only in youth, but in strong health, have been cut down, and that without warning. O, I could mention so many cases that have fallen under my own observation, and some, too, of a most melancholy cha-

racter. And am I wrong? Some cases of a similar kind have been known to you. "In the midst of life we are in death." O, how many illustrations of this fact occur every year, and in every place! And do you still say, "there is time enough yet!" Had you seen Mr. Loomis, of Bangor, ascend the pulpit on a certain new-year Sabbath, you would have thought it probable that he would ascend his pulpit many Sabbaths yet to come. Alas! he had entered it for the last time. He arose and took his text, it was this: "This year thou shalt die." He made a few remarks, turned pale, and sank down in his pulpit a lifeless corpse. His pulpit was his death-chamber, and his gown his winding-sheet. "Time enough yet!" If you had seen Judge Boling rise up in the hall of the House of Representatives a few years ago, and address the Speaker, you might have expected him to make many more speeches in that hall of legislation; but, alas! he was then making his last speech. "Mr. Speaker," said he; and while addressing the chair, the angel of death touched him, and he fell down a dead man! "Time enough yet!" If you had seen Colonel Bowie, some eighteen or twenty years since, enter a certain church in the city of Washington, you would little have thought that he had entered the church of God for the last time; but so it was. While the man of God in the pulpit was preaching to the

people the unsearchable riches of Christ, all who were present, heard a groan! It was his last. Colonel Bowie fell upon the floor and immediately expired! His friends gathered around and carried him out a dead man. And O, who can forget the sudden death of Emmet, of Harper, and of Clinton; and especially the tragical and most melancholy affair on board the Princeton, when two of the heads of the departments of government, with several other distinguished individuals, were in a moment launched into eternity? Ah! my brethren, we can compute the length of any natural day, but not how long any man is going to live on earth; we can tell precisely when the natural sun will set, but not when the sun of life will go down. Sometimes the period of man's life is lengthened like a summer's day; sometimes it is made short as a day in midwinter. Sometimes the sun of life goes down at noon, and sometimes while it is yet early in the morning. Sometimes it fades away like the fleecy cloud on the azure sky; sometimes it appears like the meteor flashing and coruscating in the heavens, and then in a moment quenched and gone out.

“Our life contains a thousand springs,
And fails if one be gone;
Strange that a harp of thousand strings
Should keep in tune so long.”

“Boast not thyself of to-morrow,” said one

who uttered many wise sayings; "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." When such mighty interests are at stake, none should presume upon the future. "Be wise to-day, 'tis madness to defer."

Once more: "I must wait God's time." Some really seem to be waiting for miracles. I know very well that Saul of Tarsus was miraculously arrested on his way to Damascus, but let not every sinner expect miracles on his way to Damascus. But does not David say, "My soul waiteth for the Lord." Certainly he said so, but did he not also add, "More than they that watch for the morning." How remarkable the expression, "More than they that watch for the morning;" that is, more than the nurse in the chamber of the sick man, who looks out at the window, and longs for the breaking of the day; or more than the sentinel in a cold damp night looks towards the east, and longs for the rising of the morning-star. Can you say that you do wait for the Lord more than they who do thus long for the breaking of the day, and the rising of the morning-star? You are waiting God's time. Is this really so? Then, be it thus; but remember, the present is his time, as it is written, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." And again, "Choose ye this day whom you will serve." And again,

“To-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.”

And now, my friends, in closing, hear me! O, do attend to what I say! Only a little while, and we shall have done with the scenes of this transitory state—only a little while, and our race will have been run, our probation closed, and our character and destiny sealed for ever! Our eternal all is at stake! Let there be no trifling in this matter; bring near the scenes which are certainly before us. Suppose you were now upon a dying bed, how would your excuses appear? Suppose this was the very moment of your leaving the world—pulse quivering, blood freezing, heart-strings breaking, soul panting, shuddering, launching away—how would your excuses appear? But change the scene. Suppose this were the great judgment-day, and all its tremendous scenes now passing before you—trump sounding, dead rising, God descending, angels shouting, devils wailing—in these solemn circumstances how would your excuses appear? If your excuses are good, my counsel is, hold them fast! Do not let the minister take them from you, do not let your mother take them from you; let no one take them from you. If you are sure they are good, I repeat it, hold them fast; carry them with you all along the journey of life; carry them with you down into the grave, and up to the judgment bar; plead them before your Maker. If your ex-

cuses are good, God is just, and he will sustain them. But, if they are not good, (and is there not a misgiving in your heart, even now—aye, a conviction that they are not good?) I change my counsel altogether. If not good, do not hold them fast; I beseech you, do not carry them with you through the journey of life! Do not, I entreat you, as you value your precious souls, do not carry them with you down to the grave, nor up to the judgment bar, lest God look upon you, and you wither away—lest God frown upon you, and you perish for ever!

SERMON XII.

IDLENESS REPROVED.

And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?—MATTHEW xx. 6.

It was foretold of our blessed Saviour, that he should open his mouth in parables, and we find that it was oftentimes in this way that he instructed his friends and silenced his enemies. The parable of the householder, like that of the prodigal son, is of a national character, and was primarily designed to repre-

sent the Jewish and the Gentile nations, and to exhibit the goodness and the sovereignty of God. By the vineyard we are to understand the church of God. By the householder the Head of the church. By the labourers hired early in the morning, we may understand those brought in, in the patriarchal age. By those hired at the third, sixth, and ninth hours, those brought in under the ministry of Moses, Samuel, and John the Baptist; and by those hired at the eleventh hour, the Gentiles are evidently intended, who were brought in at that period of the world commonly denominated the last days. By accommodation, and for important practical purposes, we may take this view of the subject. By the vineyard we may understand as before, the church of God; by the householder, the Head of the church; whilst by the day we may understand the season of grace allotted to us in this world; and by the different hours in which the labourers were hired, we may understand the different periods in which sinners are converted and brought into the bosom of the church. Taking this view of the parable, we wish

I. To point out those who are spiritually idle, and

II. Mention those who have probably reached the eleventh hour.

I. Point out those who are spiritually idle. To determine this matter, we need only inquire,

what is that great business which we have to attend to in this world; and then it will, of course, follow as a necessary consequence, that those who are neglecting this grand concern, are, and ought to be, numbered with those who are spiritually idle. And now, my brethren, what is this great concern? Rest assured, God Almighty never sent us into this world merely that we might plant, and build, and buy and sell, and get gain, and then go and sleep an everlasting sleep in the grave. How much less did he send us into this world that we might run the round of worldly pleasure, and fashion, and sin, and folly, and then drop into the pit which has no bottom! O no! Man has an immortal soul, and a higher destiny awaits him. He is to prepare for another and a better world. According to the Scriptures there is a heaven. O heaven, sweet heaven! The purchase of a Saviour's blood, the Christian's rest, the pilgrim's home, the dwelling place of love, of glory, and of God! The patriarchs are there, the prophets are there, the martyrs are there, our blessed Saviour is there, aye, and all who have fallen asleep in Jesus, are there! O heaven, sweet heaven! the loveliest and most desirable place in all the empire of the great God! This being the case, our great business on earth is to live and act in such a manner, that having glorified God in our day and generation, we

may, when death comes, have nothing to do but to die, to fall asleep in Jesus, and wake up in that holy and happy world, and there be with God and his angels for ever and ever! Yes, my brethren, this is our great business on earth, and, in comparison with it, everything else dwindles into perfect insignificance; for “what is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?” And now, let it be remarked, there are two things which constitute essential parts of this business of preparation for heaven, viz. repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. We must repent of our sins.—This was the burden of John the Baptist; with this doctrine our Saviour commenced his ministry, and you recollect the language of Paul upon Mars Hill. “The times of this ignorance,” says he, “God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.” And for this he assigns a substantial reason; “for,” continues he, “God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness.” And, you recollect, that when some told our Saviour of certain Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices, he replied, “Think ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you nay, but except ye repent,

ye shall all likewise perish." How sweeping is this language! "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." He comes as it were, to the rich man rolling in affluence, and says: Thinkest thou, O rich man, that thy wealth on earth will plead for thee in the day of judgment? I tell thee nay, "but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." He comes to the poor man, struggling with adversity, and says: Thinkest thou, O poor man, that thy trials on earth will exempt thee in the day of reckoning? I tell thee nay, "but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." He comes also to the man of silvery locks, and says: Thinkest thou, aged man, that thy silvery locks will stand thee instead at the bar of thy Maker? I tell thee nay, "but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Aye, and he comes to the young man, and the young maiden, who have the freshness of youth upon them, and says: Thinkest thou, O vain youth, that the dew of thy youth will plead for thee, in the day of final accounts? I tell thee nay, "but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." I repeat it, the language is sweeping—all have sinned, says the apostle, and therefore all must repent, or there is no such thing as entering the heavenly world. The Bible settles the matter, and we see that it must be so in the very nature of the case; for, suppose the sinner to enter heaven in an impenitent state, what would he do there? Cer-

tainly he would justify himself, and condemn his Maker. He would plant the standard of revolt "hard by the throne of God," and teach lessons of rebellion to the loyal and happy ones in glory. The thought is horrible. The case then is doubly clear, that where God is, the impenitent sinner cannot come; where heaven is, the impenitent sinner can have no place. These things being so, repentance forming an essential part of the business of preparation for heaven, it is important that we know what true repentance is. It implies a conviction of sin. Serious thought is not enough; we must feel that we are sinners, and great sinners, in the sight of God, and that it is of his mercies that we have not been consumed. Moreover, true repentance implies sorrow of heart that we have sinned against a Being so good and great; and especially that we have so long slighted and rejected a dying Saviour. Besides, in true repentance, there is always a settled purpose to forsake our sins and turn from all our evil ways. Believe me, brethren, this work of repentance is a deep work. It takes hold upon the heart, and revolutionizes all the feelings of the soul. We must repent, not like the hypocritical Ephraimites, who howled indeed upon their beds, but cried not unto God in their hearts; nor like the king of Egypt, who repented whilst the mighty thunderings were sounding in his ears, but who, so soon as they

were hushed, sinned on as before; nor like the unhappy Judas, who legally repented, and then went and hanged himself. No! but we must repent like a David, who offered to God the sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. We must repent like the prodigal, who said, "I will arise and go to my Father, and say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants;" and who arose and did accordingly. In short, we must repent like the publican, who, "standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." And now permit me to ask each one in this assembly, respectfully, have you repented? You have shed many tears, it may be, but not one for your sins. You have heaved many sighs, but perhaps not one for your sins. And you have felt many a pang, but not one for your sins. Is this so? Alas! you have neglected one of the essential parts of the business of preparation for heaven; you are numbered with those who are spiritually idle; and what if the angel of death touch you, in your present state? Alas! you are undone, gone for ever! But

2. We must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.—This is another essential part of the business of preparation for heaven. You re-

collect that when certain ones asked our Saviour what they should do to work the work of God, he replied, "This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent." And so important and so essential is this, that the Saviour himself says, "He that believeth not, shall be damned." And now, what is it to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? There need be no difficulty. Understanding the way of salvation, through a crucified Saviour, and approving of that way, we are cordially to accept of it, thanking God for his unspeakable gift. But as so much has been said about historical faith, temporary faith, saving faith, and the like, it may be proper for us to examine the matter a little further. Faith, I would define to be, the belief of the testimony of God in general, having special reference to Christ as the sinner's only hope, or in other language, it is simply to take God at his word. In the eleventh chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, we find numerous exemplifications of the nature of faith. For example: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." God had said unto Noah, "The end of all flesh is come before me, for the earth is filled with violence through them, and behold, I will destroy them with the earth; make thee an ark; and behold I, even I do bring a flood of waters upon the

earth, to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life from under heaven, but with thee will I establish my covenant, and thou shalt come into the ark, thou and thy sons, thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee." Now Noah believed, in his heart, that it really would be just as God had said, and he acted accordingly. This was faith, in relation to this matter. Let a similar faith be exercised in relation to Christ, and the soul is saved. For example, it is written, Behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation, and he that believeth in him shall not be ashamed.* Now, let the sinner venture his soul on this naked promise of a God that cannot lie. Let him take God at his word, and put him upon his honour, and he exercises that faith which will assuredly land the soul in glory. The illustration of Cecil is in point, it is substantially this: Coming into his house one day, he saw his little girl amusing herself with some beautiful beads: wishing to teach her the nature of faith, he said, "My daughter, throw those beads into the fire." O! how could the little girl throw her pretty beads into the fire? And as she was hesitating, her father added, "My daughter, throw those beads into the fire, and you shall not lose by it." The little girl looked in her

* Compare Isaiah xxviii. 16, with Romans ix. 33.

father's face, to see if he was in good earnest: convinced of this, she made a desperate effort, and threw her beads into the fire. The next day he went out and bought a number of beautiful articles, likely to please a girl of her age, and coming in, with a pleasant countenance, said, "My daughter, your father makes you a present this morning of this box and all it contains." "What," said she, "all these beautiful things mine, papa?" "Yes, my dear, this is your father's present this morning." "What, all these beautiful things mine?"—Almost too good to be true! And now, whilst her eyes were sparkling with delight, and her little heart was dancing for joy, her father said, "My daughter, do not you recollect, yesterday I said, 'Throw those beads into the fire, and you shall not lose by it?'" "Yes, papa." "Well, have you lost anything by it now?" "O! no, papa," said she, "no indeed!" "Now," replied he, "I have done this to show you what faith is. The Bible says, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall not lose by it. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

How perfectly simple faith is! I repeat it, it is just to take God at his word, and put him upon his honour. A man dreamed once, (I care nothing about dreams, but I like illustrations,)—a man dreamed once that he was going along in the broad road, and Satan was

dragging him down to hell: alarmed, he cried for help, and suddenly one appeared in a lovely form, and said, "Follow me!" Immediately Satan vanished; and in his dream the man thought he followed the heavenly one in a straight and narrow way, until he came to a river, where he saw no bridge. Pointing in a certain direction, the angel said, "Pass over that bridge."—"I see no bridge," said the man. "Yes there is a bridge, and you must pass over it, for there is no other, and heaven is beyond." Looking more narrowly, the dreamer saw what appeared to be a hair, extending from one bank of the river to the other bank. "Pass over on that," said the angel. "O, how can I?" said the man, "it is too slender, and cannot sustain me."—"It will sustain you. I am from above, I lie not, and I give you my word it will sustain you." And now, whilst the man was trembling and afraid to venture, he thought that Satan again seized upon him to drag him down to hell. Urged by necessity, he put his foot upon the bridge, slender as it appeared, and found it solid plank, a substantial bridge, and he went over safely, and entered shouting into the heavenly world. Now the awakened sinner, under divine influences, is brought, so to speak, to the bank of the river. Heaven is beyond. He asks how he can reach that happy world. He is told he must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and he shall be saved; but this

promise is not enough; it appears only as the hair extended from one bank of the river to the other bank. The sinner wants something more substantial; but this is the bridge which must take him over, and there is no other. And slender as the bridge of divine promise may appear in his eyes, only let him venture upon it, and he shall know that it is strong enough to sustain millions. Some persons stumble at the simplicity of the way of salvation. There is no occasion, for everything that God does is marked with simplicity. What man does is apt to be complicated; but in union with wisdom and grandeur, a beautiful simplicity reigns throughout all the works of God. Suppose, my friends, you and I had the lighting up of the world, what a complicated machinery we would have. How many ten thousand lamps would we make use of? and the world by these would not be well lighted up after all. But God proposes to light up the world, and, only see! one brilliant sun, like an urn of overflowing light, pours day upon the world; better, infinitely better, than all our lamps. Even so, if all the ministers on earth, aye, and if all the angels in heaven should unite their efforts to save one sinner from the damnation of hell, it would be all in vain. But thank God, one loving, dear, dying Christ can save millions, can save all who will come unto God through him. Hence

this language of the Saviour himself: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." And as many are apt to stumble at the simplicity of this way of salvation, the Saviour comes over the same ground again, substantially, in the very next verse: "For," continues he, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." In the next verse the same idea is, with some change of phraseology, presented a third time, and in the following verse even a fourth time. This is remarkable, and it seems to speak this language:—Ye sons of men, marvel not at the simplicity of the way of salvation. This is the way—this is the way! Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. And, to crown the matter, how clear and easily understood is the Saviour's illustration in reference to the brazen serpent. The children of Israel were bitten by fiery serpents. The venom was deadly. Moses could not heal them; the elders of Israel could not heal them; nor could they heal themselves. God alone could meet the case. In the plenitude of his mercy he directs Moses to prepare a brazen serpent, and place it upon a pole in the midst of the camp; and was pleased to pledge his veracity that those who, when bitten, would

look, should live. Here is an Israelite bitten. He is in the most remote part of the camp, writhing in agony upon the ground. "O send for Moses," says he, "send for the elders." They come, and ask what is the matter? "O Moses," replies he, "a serpent has bitten me, I am in agony, I am dying! O help me!" "I cannot help you," says Moses. "Elders of Israel, for pity's sake help a dying man!" "We cannot help you," say they. "Well, what is to be done, must I die?" "Certainly not. There is no necessity," says Moses. "Yonder is the brazen serpent, placed upon the pole for this very purpose, that those who are bitten, on looking, should live." Now the man, seeing that Moses cannot cure him, nor the elders, nor can he cure himself—convinced that this is the last resort, the only remedy, turns his dying eyes upon the brazen serpent, and springing up, exclaims, "Glory be to God, I am cured! I am a sound man!" Now, says the Saviour, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have eternal life." And this falls in with another passage of Scripture: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else." Yes, my brethren, a crucified Saviour is the sinner's only hope. One look of faith at this bleeding victim, and you are converted! One look of

faith, and your sins are all forgiven! Aye, one look of faith at this great atoning sacrifice, and the universe is changed in relation to you, and over you there are shoutings in the heavenly world—"The dead is alive again, and the lost is found." But you say, perhaps, that you do not understand what is meant by this look; I will give an illustration. Here is a stripling; a strong man has seized upon him, and threatens to take his life. The stripling cannot cope with this strong man; he wants his father, who is a stronger man, to come to his relief. He looks, and sees his father in the distance. You can understand that look. Only cast such a look toward the blessed Saviour, and so sure as the Bible is true, you will reach at last the heavenly world, and there a crown of glory shall rest upon your head. And now remember, this exercise of faith in Christ is indispensably necessary. It forms an essential part of the business of preparation for heaven, for the sum and substance of all that the Bible says upon this subject is this: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." And here I would remark, if you wish to know whether your faith is of the right kind, you must try it by the Bible test. To you that believe, says Peter, He, that is, Christ, is precious. Yes, the genuine believer has new views of Christ as a suitable

and most precious Saviour. And whereas the blessed Saviour was to him before as a root out of a dry ground, without form or comeliness, he is now the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley; yea, the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely; and he can enter into the feelings of the poet, who says,

“O, could I speak the matchless worth;
O, could I sound the glories forth
Which in my Saviour shine!
I’d soar and touch the heavenly strings,
And vie with Gabriel, while he sings,
In notes almost divine!”

These things being so, if there be any who love not the Lord Jesus, who have never felt their need of him—in other words, who have never received him in the arms of a confiding and appropriating faith, let all such know that they have neglected an essential part of the great business which they must attend to in this world, or never enter heaven. However active and industrious they may be in relation to the things of this world, they have neglected the great concern, and must be enrolled amongst the spiritually idle, and to them I would say, “Why stand ye here all the day idle?” But this leads me

II. To point out those who have probably reached the eleventh hour. It is well known that the Jews, in ancient times, divided their day into twelve hours. The third hour being

about nine o'clock; the sixth, noon; the ninth, about three o'clock, P.M.; and of course the eleventh hour was near the closing of the day. If we may be permitted to make a corresponding division of the day of grace, doubtless there are some present who have reached the third hour, some the sixth, some the ninth, and some the eleventh hour. We cannot say who have positively reached either of these periods, but we wish to point out those who have probably reached the last, the eleventh hour.

1. Those advanced in age. This is a clear case, for their hoary locks, their increasing infirmities, and the dimness passing over their eyes plainly show, that with them the third hour is gone, the sixth hour is passed, even the ninth hour is rolled away, and the eleventh is come. Aged sinner, your sun is near its setting, the shadows of evening are lengthening around you, your eleventh hour is come! Have you never yet entered the vineyard? O how much precious time have you wasted! How very long you have been perilling the salvation of your soul! And are you still neglecting the great business, the grand concern? O how criminal and dangerous is this neglect! "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" But,

2. Those whose health is failing have also probably reached the eleventh hour. I know very well, that diseases are not always the immediate harbingers of death, but frequently

they are. Our Saviour, it is true, said of a Lazarus, when he was sick, this sickness is not unto death; but who can approach any one on earth, whose health is now impaired, and use that language? Ah! could we look into the rolls of heaven, and know the number of months appointed unto them, we would perhaps have to say, at least of some of them, as the prophet said of Benhadad when he was sick, "The Lord hath showed me that thou shalt surely die!" There may be a fever just beginning to revel in the veins, that is to land this one in the house appointed for all living! And there may be a slight cold now falling upon the lungs which is to wrap that one in the winding-sheet before many more months shall have rolled away! The healthful may die, and suddenly too, but those whose health is impaired, seem to be already summoned! "Why stand ye here all the day idle?"

In casting my eye over this large congregation, I see many who are in the morning of life, and many too, who, although not young, are nevertheless in strong and vigorous health, and they may be flattering themselves with the idea that it is quite early in the day with them yet. If the third hour is gone, surely it is not beyond the sixth, or at the utmost the ninth hour! My dear brethren, be not too confident in this matter. Where is your grave-yard! Let us pay it a brief visit. Ah! what do we there see?

Long graves and short graves, and graves of every kind! Yes, there hoary age and beardless youth sleep side by side! Suppose all in this sanctuary should now withdraw, and all the dead in the neighboring graveyards should rise up out of their graves, and, wrapped in their winding-sheet, should fill this house, what kind of a congregation, in relation to age, would it be? Very much, I suspect, like the present assembly. Here we might see some patriarchal man, with his locks silvery with age; there a venerable matron far advanced in the vale of life; here we might see a youthful husband, and there the wife of his youth. In another part of the church, we might see a promising son, just ripening into manhood; and there a daughter, and a lovely one, just turned of sixteen; whilst in that pew we might see a child, the pride of doating parents; and there a sweet little babe whom angels sung to rest! And here, too, where I stand, we might see a Rodgers or a Wesley, bending under the load of age—or a Spencer, or a Larned, vigorous in youthful days.

Ah! my brethren, the congregation of the dead is very much like the congregation of the living. It embraces persons of every age, and every sex. Young men and maidens, old men and children, they all do lie down together in the dust, and the worms do cover them. Suppose then, you are in good health, and even

young, you are not sure, you cannot be, that your eleventh hour has not yet come. Whilst with some the period of life on earth is long and extended as a summer's day, with others it is short and contracted as a day in mid-winter. Sometimes the sun of life goes down at noon, and sometimes even whilst the dew is yet upon the ground. And whilst in some cases life gradually fades away, as the fleecy cloud which imperceptibly melts away on the azure sky, sometimes it vanishes like the meteor, which for a few moments plays along the edge of a tempest, and then is gone. O how uncertain is life! We may compute the length of any natural day, but we cannot tell the length of any day of life. We can tell the very minute when yonder sun will set, but we cannot tell the hour, nor the month, nor the year, when the sun of life will go down; hence the language of the Saviour, "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." Then be not too sure that your eleventh hour has not arrived. But suppose you knew precisely when your life on earth would terminate. Suppose it were reduced to a certainty that you should attain three-score years and ten, even in that case you could not say that your eleventh hour has not arrived. And here I now bring forward one of the most awful doctrines found in all the sacred volume. It is this—that the

day of grace is not always as long as the day of life. "My Spirit," says God, "shall not always strive with man." "Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone." Paul speaks of some who were given over to a hard heart, and a reprobate mind; and, with regard to others he says, "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. The idea is this: that some, on account of their sins, are judicially hardened. Having grieved the Spirit, he takes his departure; and left to themselves they become incorrigible, past feeling, and past hope. But how shall we find out when their day of grace is drawing to a close? As there are certain symptoms which indicate the closing of the natural day, even so there are certain symptoms which, to say the least, seem to give awful indications that the day of grace is drawing to a close. We do not pretend to decide upon any individual case. We make general remarks, and we do it to sound a seasonable alarm in the ears of those who are still idle, although they have too much reason to fear that their day of grace is winding up.

(1.) When the natural day is drawing to a close, the heat abates, and the chilling influence of approaching night is felt. Even so, when the day of grace is drawing to a close,

the warmth of religious feeling subsides, and the chilling, freezing, deadening influence of sin, comes over the soul. O, if there are any present who were once excited on the subject of religion; who, at some past period, when they mused upon their lost condition had the fire to burn within, but have now a cold heart, and have lost all concern about their future salvation, they have awful reason to fear that they have grieved the Spirit, and that he is now leaving them, it may be for ever! Yes, if after having been blessed with awakening influences, their hearts have become cold and worldly minded, they have now but too much reason to fear that with them the third hour is gone—the sixth hour is gone—the ninth hour rolled away—and that the eleventh hour is come! “Why stand ye here all the day idle?”

(2.) When the natural day is drawing to a close, light diminishes and darkness begins to steal over the face of creation. Thus, about the eleventh hour of the day of grace, spiritual light grows dim, and judicial darkness thickens upon the soul.* The illuminations of the Divine Spirit frequently issue in the sound conversion of the soul unto God; sometimes, however, they do not. They make visible the strait gate and narrow way, but being resisted, the sinner after all is left to perish in his sin. This is truly an awful case, for, according to the apostle Peter, it were better not to have

known the way of life, than after we have known it to turn from the holy commandment. Yes, it were better never to have had the illuminations of the Spirit, than after we have had them, to have the shades of spiritual death to fall upon the soul; for, in addition to other sins laid to the charge of such persons, they will have to answer for quenching the Spirit. Are there not some present who can recollect the time when they had comparatively clear views of the value of the soul, the importance of religion, and the necessity of the Saviour? How is it now? Have these things faded upon the view? Are they in a great measure hidden from their eyes? Alas! their case is an alarming one. They have reason to fear that their day of grace is drawing to a close!—that the third hour is gone—and the sixth hour gone—and the ninth hour is also rolled away—and that the eleventh hour is come! O, ye loiterers! ye who are procrastinating and putting off to some future period the claims of God and eternity, you have much reason to wake up and bestir yourselves, for your sun seems indeed to be going down, and the shadows of evening lengthening around you. “Why stand ye here all the day idle?”

(3.) Once more.—When the natural day is drawing to a close, labourers are becoming weary of labour, and are more disposed to

sit down, lie down, and slumber and sleep, than to toil and labour any more. Just so it is with the spiritual idler about the close of the day of grace. Sometimes persons, during revivals, and at other times too, when under awakening influences, are greatly roused, take a lively interest in religious matters; set a great value upon all the means of grace; are willing, if necessary, to walk many miles to church; and that through rain, through mud and mire; and are willing, moreover, to be personally conversed with on the subject of religion. After awhile, however, these persons begin to lose their interest in all such matters; begin to absent themselves from the house of God; complain that the sermon is too long, and the preacher too plain. And, like certain ones in the times of Amos the prophet, are ready to say of the Sabbath, O what a weariness it is; when will the Sabbath be gone, that we may sell corn and set forth wheat? Amos viii. 5. Moreover, if a pious friend speaks to them on the subject of religion, they have no relish for such conversation, and are ready to say, "Let me alone!" Alas! the case is clear! such have grieved the Spirit of God; he is withdrawing his quickening influences, and the consequence is, religion is becoming irksome, and all its duties tiresome; and having lost the interest which they once felt in religious matters, they would now much rather

lie down in spiritual sloth, and slumber and sleep in carnal security, than labour to enter into the promised land. Are there any in this house whom this picture suits? I solemnly declare I would not be in their case for a thousand worlds, for they have awful reason to fear that the shades of night are gathering around them, even the shades of that "long, dark, dark night, which has no morn beyond it, and no star." O, it is a dreadful thing to be abandoned of the Spirit, and to be given over to a hard heart and a reprobate mind! And yet there is such a thing as the day of grace closing before death comes. How awful the thought! Whilst the sinner is in the midst of his sins, and in the midst of health, too, the sentence may go forth against him—"Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone;" and then, although yet on earth, he is sealed over to wrath. Passing along the road you look over the fence and see an old field; the trees, cut down, are lying upon the ground, and rotting there. This may represent the sinner, cut down by the hand of death, his body laid in the grave, and his soul sunk deeper than the grave. Passing along you see another old field. The trees are not cut down, it is true, but none are alive: although standing, they are all dead. Their branches are dry, and there is no foliage there. How is this? The axeman has girdled them;

the showers descend and the winds of heaven pass over them; their branches rattle in the breeze, but there is no verdure, no foliage any more. O, procrastinating sinner! remember, God may girdle you this day; and should he do it, I tell you the truth, it will be all over with you for ever. Hence this language of Scripture, "Woe also to them when I depart from them," saith the Lord. Hos. ix. 12. In such a case, all the moral and religious sensibilities of the soul are deadened. The heart becomes like rock, like adamant. As the dead man feels not the burning of the coal lodged in his bosom, and as the flinty rock feels not the softening influences of the showers of heaven, so it is with the sinner when his day of grace is brought to a close. He is past feeling and past hope. Have any persons present, then, any reason whatever to believe that the eleventh hour is come with them? Surely it is high time for them to wake up; to enter the vineyard, and diligently to prepare for a better world. "Why stand ye here all the day idle?"

Having pointed out those who are spiritually idle, and those who have probably reached the eleventh hour, suffer me now to expostulate and conclude. O, ye who have neglected the great concern, and have suffered so much of your day of grace to pass away unimproved, "why stand ye here all the day idle?" What reason can you give? Have you no souls? Or is

it a matter of no consequence to you whether they be happy or miserable, saved or damned, in the world to come? Have you spent the third, sixth, and ninth hour in idleness, and will you spend in the same way the eleventh also? What! this little remnant of the day of grace, which through mercy yet remains to you, will you spend that in idleness also? Will you approve of this upon a dying bed? Will you justify it amid the thunders of the last great day? O, tell me, then, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?"

Do you say that no one has invited you? What! no pious friend, no mother, no sister, no companion, no minister, no man of God? Can you say this? My brother, beloved pastor of this church, have you never invited them? O yes, I am sure you have, most affectionately, and most earnestly, and may I not almost add, times and ways without number! Can you not recollect, my friends, how on such an occasion this man of God entered the sacred desk, having unusual solemnity depicted in his countenance. You recollect he took his text, and reasoned concerning righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come. As he proceeded he waxed warm; he filled his mouth with arguments; he brought the high claims of God and eternity to bear powerfully upon the understanding, the conscience, and the heart. And what was this? It was my brother's plan of

inviting you to enter into the vineyard; and when he saw that you were unaffected, the man of God wept! O how sacred are the tears of the faithful and affectionate pastor, weeping over those of his charge who refuse to attend to the great concern! It is the spirit of the prophet, who said, If ye will not hear, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride. Yea it is the Spirit of the blessed Jesus himself, who beheld the city and wept over it, saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which make for thy peace, but now they are hidden from thine eyes." But to proceed: When my brother saw that his reasonings were not regarded, and that his arguments produced no impression, you recollect he changed his voice, and, so to speak, taking you by the hand, he led you to the gate of the celestial city, and pointing out the glories and the joys of that happy world, and that you might finally have a happy entrance there, he urged you to attend to the great concern. And when he saw you still careless, again the man of God wept! What a loud call was this from your beloved pastor, to enter into the vineyard? But this was not all: when he saw you careless still, he was ready to give up and retire in despondency: but the thought of the value of your precious souls, and his own responsibility, roused him to make yet another effort. In his description, he led you to the borders of the pit;

he drew aside the curtain; he pointed out to you the world of wo, and caused you to hear, as it were, the wailings of those who had lost their day, and were now crying out in anguish, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." And what was this, but another effort of my brother to arouse you, and to press you to enter into the vineyard? What! no one invited you? Yes, methinks your pious father did; and it was in a solemn hour! It was on a dying bed! Some one told you that your father was very ill, and wished to see you. You trembled, and hastened to obey the summons; with solemn feelings you entered the door of his chamber. The curtains were down, the room was darkened! Silence and grief reigned there! Silence, still as the grave, except broken by the light footsteps of those who passed gently over the carpeted floor; or the low whisperings of those who marked the sad symptoms of approaching death; or, perchance, broken by the hard breathing of the one who was now drawing near his end! With a trembling heart, you approached the bed-side of your dying parent. He saw you, and took you by the hand. His hand was cold as clay, and the sweat of death was upon his pale brow. He pressed your hand, and looked you in the face. Can you ever forget that look? It spoke volumes! He wished to speak, but he was very feeble—again he pressed your hand, and said,

“God bless you, my child! Meet me in heaven!” Then, looking up, he said, “Precious Saviour, I am ready now! Come, Lord Jesus! come quickly!” And while you were looking on, he ceased to breathe, and was with his God! And was this no call? O yes, you have received a call from the very threshold of heaven—aye, and from one who loved you, and longed to meet you in that happy world. How can you, then, say that no one has invited you? “Why stand ye here all the day idle?”

Do you say that the work is too great? I know it is too great for your unaided strength, but you may obtain strength from on high. Yes, there is a power divine, which stands ready to afford all needful aid. This power has sufficed for many. It may suffice for you. There is not a want in the sinner, but there is a corresponding fulness in the blessed Saviour. Fear not, says this heavenly Friend to the trembling soul—fear not, I will help thee, I will strengthen thee, yea, I will uphold thee by the right hand of my righteousness.

Perhaps you think the work is so easy it may be accomplished at any time, even in your last moments. To be sure it might, if God should then give you grace. But are you sure that he will? Is it likely? When you have given the best of your days to the service of the devil, is it reasonable to suppose that God will accept of the dregs? O, how many

a poor sinner is snatched away without warning. How many go delirious to their graves; and how many, if not delirious, are racked with pain. How many are stupid; how many are too feeble to bear any excitement; and how many are purely under the influence of fear. O how unwise, and O how perilous it is to put off to the last moment that which should engage our first and most serious concern! I could tell you of some death-bed scenes, but I spare you. "Why stand ye here all the day idle?"

Do you say that the householder is not willing to receive you? "Say unto them, as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn and live. Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Say not then that the householder is not willing to receive you; at least say it not until with all your heart you have entreated his favour and he has frowned you away.

Do you say that the reward is not enough? What! to have our sins forgiven, is this nothing? to have our peace made with heaven, is this nothing? and to be adopted into the family of the Great God, is this nothing? The reward not enough! What! when we are about to die, to find ourselves under the shadow of the Almighty—is this nothing? To find ourselves encircled in the arms of everlasting

love—is this nothing? To find ourselves encompassed by angels, and just on the wing for glory—is this nothing? And when the soul is dislodged from its earthly tenement, to be carried by angels into Abraham's bosom, to hear the plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord;" to see the King in his beauty; to be robed and crowned, and emparadised in heaven; and to be associated with the spirits of the just made perfect, and to live and reign with Christ in glory everlasting—is all this nothing? O, my brethren, the rewards are the rewards of grace, they are the purchase of a Saviour's blood, and therefore will be rich and great beyond all the power of language to express, or the heart of man to conceive. Immortal man! lose not the prize held up before you! Be up and a-doing! "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" O think now much is at stake—even your own soul—your own precious soul! O who can tell its value! Suppose this world were a globe of gold, and each star in yonder firmament a jewel of the first order, and the moon a diamond, and the sun literally a crown of all created glory—one soul, in value, would outweigh them all. Here is a man standing on board of a vessel at sea, holding his hands over the sides of the vessel; he is sporting with a jewel, worth a hundred thousand dollars, and which too, is all his fortune. Play-

ing with his jewel, he throws it up, and catches it—throws it up and catches it! A friend noticing the brilliancy of the jewel, warns him of the danger of losing it, and tells him that if it slip through his fingers it goes down to the bottom of the deep, and can be recovered no more. “O, there is no danger,” says he, “I have been doing this a long time, and you see I have not lost it yet.” Again he throws it up, and—it is gone! past recovery—gone! O, when the man finds that his jewel is indeed lost, and by his own folly lost, who can describe his agony, as he exclaims, “I have lost my jewel, my fortune, my all!” O sinner, hear me, casketed in your bosom, you have a jewel of infinitely greater value; in idling away your precious time, you are in danger of losing that pearl of price unknown. In other words, neglecting the interests of your precious soul, you are in danger of being lost for ever. O, why neglect any longer the great concern? Many of your dearest friends are in the vineyard, why linger you without? “Why stand ye here all the day idle?”

Well, the evening will come when the Lord of the vineyard will say to his steward—“Call the labourers and give them their hire.” O glorious hour! O, sweet coronation day! How will the labourers come! From the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. Millions crowding upon millions!

Christians of every communion, and the pious from out of every nation under heaven. With what joy will they come around the heavenly Householder, and at his hand receive the high rewards of grace. Methinks with a smile he will reach out to them the crown—the glittering crown; and they will take the crown—the glittering crown, and sing and shout, “O to grace how great a debtor!” And he will give the robe—the spotless robe; and they will take the robe—the spotless robe, and sing and shout, “O to grace how great a debtor!” And now all heaven rings jubilee, as the ransomed of the Lord return and come to this heavenly Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. But the idlers!—those who all their lives long neglected the great concern, who died without repentance and without faith—where are they? Alas! they are far away! There is no robe for them, no crown for them, no heaven for them! They have lost their day, and they have lost their souls; and now nothing remains for them but thrilling remorse and black despair! O, my procrastinating friends, you have one call more; it may be the call of the eleventh hour, and your last! Surely it is high time to think about eternity; it is high time to enter into the vineyard; then, “Why stand ye here all the day idle?”

SERMON XIII.

THE NECESSITY OF PREPARATION FOR DEATH.

The night cometh, when no man can work.—JOHN ix. 4.

THESE solemn words were uttered by our blessed Saviour, who spake as never man spake. The whole verse reads thus: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work." Our Saviour speaks here in his mediatorial character, and has reference to his mediatorial work. When this blessed legate from the skies came into our world, it was upon a specific errand; it was to accomplish a great work, a blessed work, a work of love and reconciliation. It was to accomplish the mighty work of man's redemption. And upon this his heart was ever set. See him in Jerusalem, when only twelve years of age, sitting with the doctors in the temple, both hearing them and asking them questions. His mother, who had been seeking him with anxiety for three days, said unto him, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." And what was his reply? "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

See him at the well of Sychar, whilst instructing the woman of Samaria. "His disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. And he said unto them, I have meat to eat, that ye know not of." And when they asked, "Hath any man brought him aught to eat? he answered and said unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." And here, in the case before us, notice his language, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work."

When the time of his departure was arrived, he could say, and did say, "Father, I have glorified thy name on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." In making an application to ourselves of the passage before us, I would call your attention to the following propositions:

I. We also, have on earth a work to perform.

II. There is a day or season given us, in which to perform this work; and

III. When that day or season is ended, then the night cometh, in which no man can work.

I. We also have on earth a work to perform. This we would state in the language of the prophet, "Prepare to meet thy God." That there is a God, all nature cries aloud. Now, this God, as revealed to us in the Scriptures, is a *great* God. Heaven is his throne, and the earth is his footstool. He fills immensity with his presence. With him all space is as a point,

all duration as a moment. —Clothed with omnipotent power, he can do all his pleasure in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth. “He can create, and he destroy;” yea, “can dash whole worlds to death, and make them when he please.” Moreover, he is a *holy* God. The very seraphims veil their faces in his presence, and cry, in notes responsive to each other, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.” This is the Being whom Isaiah saw, in the year that king Uzziah died, sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and it was in the view of his immaculate purity that the astounded prophet cried out, “Wo is me, for I am undone; for I am a man of unclean lips; and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!” Now, this God, so great and so holy, we must meet. We must meet him in the hour of death, for we are expressly told that then the dust shall return to the earth, as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. And this great and holy God we must meet also in the resurrection, in the last day. “And I saw,” says John, “a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the heavens and the earth fled away, and there was no place for them; and I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead

were judged out of those things which were written in the books." And this may remind us of the language of Paul, "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that we may receive according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or whether they have been evil."

My next remark is this: By nature, or in an unregenerate state, we are not prepared to meet God, for he is holy and just; he cannot look upon sin with allowance; and alas! the best of us are sinners, great sinners in his sight, altogether unclean, and utterly unfit to appear before him in judgment. And most terrible will be our doom, if in the great day of judgment we should be weighed and found wanting! Hence our duty, as presented in the words of the prophet: "Prepare to meet thy God." And here permit me to say, two things are essentially requisite—first, justifying righteousness; and secondly, sanctifying grace.

With regard to the first, the state of the case is this. God has given man a law, armed with penal sanctions. This law man has broken. Of course, he has incurred the penalty: this penalty is death. Satisfaction must be made, or the sinner must perish; for the law thunders out "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that sinneth." The sinner himself can make no satisfaction, for his sins are many, and his best works have,

in the sight of God, no merit. Hence it is written, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight." But now comes in Heaven's plan of justification by the righteousness of another, even of the Lord Jesus Christ, who has made the great atonement; having borne our sins in his own body upon the tree, and having thus, according to the Scriptures, made an end of transgression, and brought in everlasting righteousness. The Bible is full of this: "There is now, therefore, no condemnation," says Paul, "to them which are in Christ Jesus." And again, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." And again, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." This righteousness, according to the Scriptures, meets all the demands of the law; and arrayed in this righteousness,

"God will pronounce the sinner just,
And take the saint to heaven."

Blessed expedient of heavenly wisdom! This is the rainbow upon the body of the dark cloud; here we have the only star of hope rising upon a ruined world. But, how are we to lay hold upon this justifying righteousness, how are we to make it ours? By faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." And again, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Yes, it is this faith, this pre-

cious faith, which unites us to Christ in our effectual calling; and it is this which guarantees our acquittal and our acceptance in the great day. Hear the words of the Saviour himself: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have eternal life;" and that the matter may be made, if possible, more sure, the Saviour comes over the same ground in the very next verse: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." If, then, we would prepare to meet God in peace, we must fall in with Heaven's plan; we must accept of the Saviour provided; we must cordially receive him, with all the overflowings of a penitent and believing heart; and thus clothed upon with the robes of his righteousness—or, as it is elsewhere expressed, having our robes washed and made white in his blood, we shall stand justified in the sight of God, and have no reason to fear the thunders of the last great day. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift! O what would we do without a precious all atoning Saviour!

But, although this righteousness of Christ will avail to meet all the demands of the law, and justice of God, yet, in order that we may be prepared to enjoy the smiles of God and the

bliss of heaven, another thing is requisite—even sanctifying grace. Can a blind man enjoy the beauties of a flower garden; can a deaf man the music of the grove, or a sick man the pleasures of a banquet? No more can the sinner, without sanctifying grace, have any taste or relish for the employments and enjoyments of the heavenly world. There must be a work of the Spirit, renovating and cleansing the heart; in other words, there must be what the Scriptures denominate the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, in order to qualify us for heaven. Everything is holy there! The angels are holy, the redeemed are holy, and He who fills the throne is the thrice holy Lord God Almighty—holiness is the very element in which all who worship God in heaven do live, and move, and have their being; and our souls must be adapted to that element, or we could not be happy there. I do believe that the sinner unrenewed would be miserable even within the precincts of eternal day; hence the language, the remarkable language of the Saviour, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Observe, he does not say, will not, must not, shall not, but *cannot*. There is an impossibility in the very nature of the case. The blind man must have his eyes opened, or he cannot enjoy the beauties of the flower garden; the deaf man must have his ears un-

stopped, or he cannot enjoy the music of the grove; the sick man must be restored to health, or he cannot enjoy the pleasures of the banquet. Even so the sinner must have his heart changed, or, I repeat it, he could not be happy even in heaven. He cannot enjoy the beauties of heaven, for he is spiritually blind; he cannot enjoy the music of heaven, for he is spiritually deaf; nor can he enjoy the pleasure of heaven, for he is spiritually sick. The carnal mind is enmity against God, says the apostle; it is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. How then can he who has this carnal mind (and this is the case of every unregenerate man) be happy in the divine presence? How can he be pleased with the songs of praise which are ever ascending? How can he be pleased in contemplating the perfections of one whom he loves not? How can he be pleased with that society for which he has no taste, or those employments for which he has no relish? The soaring eagle may gaze with delight upon the brilliant sun, but the bird of night chooses not to look, even for a moment, upon that brilliant sun, nor would any man whose eyes are diseased. Alas! the unrenewed sinner is diseased in every part, and therefore, in his unrenewed state, he is not fit for heaven.

“Our nature’s totally depraved,
The heart a sink of sin;
Without a change we can’t be saved,
‘Ye must be born again.’”

And is there no hope for the sinner? Thank God, there is balm in Gilead!—there is a Physician there! He who, by his blood, can wash away the foulest stain of guilt, can, by his Spirit, cleanse the vilest heart; can slay the enmity within, yea, can sanctify us throughout, in soul, body, and spirit, and make us, as the apostle expresses it, “meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” How beautiful is this language!—Jesus Christ, made of God unto us, wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:—what a glorious, all-sufficient Saviour! There is not a want in us, but there is a corresponding fulness in him. As it is written, “It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” Let those, then, who wish to meet God in peace in the last great day, now come to Christ, who is declared to be the way, the truth and the life—or the true and living way. He is the only Mediator—he is our only hope; and, verily, no man cometh unto the Father but by him. Think of this, and prepare to meet your God!

II. There is a day or season given to us in this world, in which to attend to this matter. We are told that on the shores of the Black Sea, the winds of heaven are held in check some eighteen or twenty days every year, that the little halcyon birds may have an opportunity of making their nests and hatching their

young, on the smooth surface of the water. Be that as it may, we know that, to answer important purposes, there is seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night; moreover, Solomon says, To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill and a time to heal; a time to break down and a time to build up; a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time dance; a time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get and a time to lose; a time to keep and a time to cast away; a time to rend and a time to sew; a time to keep silence and a time to speak; a time to love and a time to hate; a time of war and a time of peace. Now, if time be given to attend to matters which relate to the body, shall not a time also be given to attend to matters which relate to the soul; if to matters of time, why not to matters of eternity? There is such a season. With regard to the antediluvians, the Spirit of God waited with them forty years, whilst Noah was building the ark; and you may remember what was said of the Jews in the wilderness: Forty years long was I grieved with that generation, so I swore in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest. And

in relation to the case of Jezebel, the faithful and true witness says, "I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not." And now, if time was granted to others, in years gone by, why not to those of the present day?

But here permit me to remark, first, This time is short. In comparison with the ages of eternity, it is short, and even in comparison with the ages beyond the flood. But, viewed in any aspect, it is short; for Job says, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble; he cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." And again, it is written, "Thou hast made my days as an handbreadth, and my age is as nothing before thee." And what says James? "What is your life? Is it not even as a vapour which appeareth for a little, and then vanisheth away?" But the language of Paul is directly to the point: "This I say, brethren, the time is short. It remaineth that they that weep be as they that wept not; and they that rejoice as they that rejoiced not; for the fashion of the world passeth away." Yes, human life is very short. Where are our fathers? And the prophets, do they live for ever? How many of the companions of our childhood are now sleeping in the grave? And if we look into our own domestic circle, or at our communion rolls, how many with whom

we once associated have already gone the way of all the earth! Ah, my brethren, it is even so:

“Our life is ever on the wing,
And death is ever nigh;
The moment when our lives begin,
We all begin to die.”

Yes, we are here to-day, and perhaps gone to-morrow! But this leads me to make a second remark—Our time on earth is not only short, it is uncertain. We know not how we shall die, nor where we shall die, nor when we shall die. We can tell how long any day in the year will last, but who can tell how long the life of any man will last? We can tell the very moment the natural sun will set, but who can tell the day or the year when his sun of life will go down? Sometimes it is like a midsummer's day, comparatively long; sometimes like a midsummer's night, comparatively short. Sometimes it is like the fleecy cloud, which gradually fades away in the blue sky—sometimes like the meteor playing upon the edge of a dark cloud. One moment it is bright and coruscating—the next moment it is gone! My friends, this is a serious thought. Death frequently comes when least expected. Sometimes no sickness heralds it. Sometimes it calls away the man in the prime of life, when he is in full strength; and sometimes the young maiden in the morning of her days, when her

cheeks are fresh and blooming. Sometimes it meets its victim in the sanctuary, and on the highway, as well as in the private dwelling and on the couch of repose. Nay, more, it has been known to visit even the theatre, the race-ground, the ball-room, and the bridal chamber! We cannot think of any place, we cannot think of any set of circumstances, in which some of the human family have not fallen under the withering stroke of death. Hence, the timely warning of the Saviour, "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." O that all would bear this in mind, and seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Seek it as an object of prime importance; and, in the first place, especially as, according to the Scriptures, there is no work, nor knowledge, nor device, nor wisdom in the grave, to which we are all going. The pious poet has well said,

"There are no acts of pardon passed,
In the cold grave to which we haste;
But darkness, death, and long despair,
Reign in eternal silence there."

III. But this leads us to our third proposition, which is this:—When this day or season allotted to us on earth is ended, then "the night cometh, when no man can work." What we do, we must do quickly; for upon the proper improvement of our time on earth de-

pende our everlasting weal or wo. Death comes, the state of the soul is fixed, and the curtain is drawn for ever. How solemn and how striking is the language of the Saviour, "The night cometh, when no man can work"—the night of death!

"That long, dark, dark night,
Which has no morn beyond it, and no star."

My brethren, what is it to die? What are the events of that last awful moment, when the fixed eye, the cold bosom, and the motionless frame, make it known that our friend is gone? What is death? It is the period when the soul leaves the body, breaks away from everything here below, and enters upon the untried scenes of another and eternal world. In other words, it is the ending of time, and the beginning of great eternity.

1. When death comes, we cease to be interested in all the exciting scenes of earth. A new star may be discovered, and living astronomers may be all alive on the subject; but a Sir Isaac Newton, or a Kepler, wrapped in the winding-sheet, and laid in the grave, takes no interest in this newly discovered star. Choice relics of antiquity may be brought to light, and antiquarians throughout the earth may, with great interest, be commenting on the matter; but the antiquarian who is numbered with the

pale nations of the dead, takes no interest in these newly discovered relics of antiquity. The affectionate wife, who, when dying, cast her last looks upon the dear man she loved, and said, My husband, come and kiss your dying wife—that wife, now laid in the dust, may have her husband, “the dear man she loved,” brought and laid side by side with her in the grave, and she salutes not her coming husband. Aye, and even the tender mother, who, as she was sinking in the arms of death, said, Bring me my sweet babe, and kissed it; and said, God bless this child; may this child meet its mother in heaven!—that mother buried, may the very next day have her grave opened, and that child, wrapped in its little windingsheet, may be brought and laid upon its mother’s bosom in the grave, and even the tender mother greets not her once darling child. How deep are the slumbers of the dead! How undisturbed by all the passing scenes of human life! Sure, ’tis a serious thing to die. What is death? Ah me! it is the ending of time, and the beginning of great eternity!

2. When death comes, we have done with all the pursuits and callings of life. The dead! alas!

“They have no share in all that’s done
Beneath the circuit of the sun.”

In death, the monarch lays down his sceptre,

and ascends his throne no more. In death, the beggar drops his crutch, and pleads for charity no more. In death, the lawyer throws up his briefs; and appears for his client no more. In death, the warrior relinquishes his sword, and braves the fury of battle no more :

“Nor song of peace, nor battle’s roar,
E’er shall break his slumbers more.”

In death, the merchant retires from his store, the mechanic from his shop, the farmer from his field, the minister from the desk, the judge from the bench, the statesman from the cabinet—to be seen in their places no more. In death, the avaricious cease to accumulate treasure; and in death, even the hard-hearted extortioner at last forgets to grind the faces of the poor. It is all over now. In the city of the dead there are no stirrs—the hum of industry is hushed—there is no voice of mirth nor songs of revelry there, nor even the voice of the bridegroom or the bride. Deep solitude is there, and silence, how profound ! Nahum, speaking of the utter ruin which should come upon Nineveh, says, “Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria; thy nobles shall dwell in the dust.” And verily this may be said of all whose house is the grave, and whose home is the city of the dead—all, even the mightiest, the noblest, and the best. As the prophet says, “Behold, the Lord of hosts doth take away the mighty man, and the man

of war, the judge and the prophet, the prudent and the ancient, the captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator." They all do slumber and dwell in the dust. "The night cometh, when no man can work."

3. When death comes, we have done with all the means of grace. Whilst in health, and in this happy land, we have the means of grace in abundance and rich variety. At the sound of the church-going bell we can enter the sanctuary of our God, and hear the gospel preached, and gather around the sacramental board, and unite in the public prayer and the sweet songs of Zion. We can read our Bibles, and the writings of the pious of every land. We can enter into our closets, and meditate and pray to our Father who seeth in secret. We can attend social prayer meetings, and commune with our Christian friends, as did those who feared God in the days of Malachi. In short, we can now have free access to all the means of grace. But when the night of death cometh, it is all past and gone! Never shall we hear the sound of the church-going bell any more; never again enter the sanctuary, nor hear the gospel preached, nor take our seats at the table of the Lord, nor join the public prayer, nor sing the songs of Zion, nor visit our closets, or enjoy the means of grace any more. The time for such things with us will be past and gone

for ever. Alas! the limbs are palsied, they cannot move; the eyes are closed, they cannot see; the ears are heavy, they cannot hear; the tongue is dumb, it cannot speak; the heart is cold, it cannot feel.

Ah, my friends, this is a very serious thought, many, very many in our land, set no value upon the means of grace. They rarely ever read the Scriptures; they rarely ever are found in the house of God, perhaps never pray; they make no use of any of the means of grace—esteem them of no value. But, as one has well said,

“How blessings brighten as they take their flight!
Like birds, whose beauties languish, half concealed,
Till mounted on the wing, their glossy plumes
Expanded, shine with azure, green, and gold.”

Yes, when the shades of evening are lengthening, and the night seems to be near at hand when no man can work, how do many wake up as from a troubled dream, and bitterly regret that they had not more highly prized the means of grace, which are now about to be taken from them for ever. “O, if I could but live my life over again, how differently would I act from what I have done!” It was in this spirit that one exclaimed in the near view of death—“I have lost a world of time, and if I could live my life over, I would spend it all in reading David’s Psalms and Paul’s Epistles.” “O, for

one Sabbath more—one sermon more!” This has, in substance, been the exclamation of more than one, upon whom the night of death has come, as a night of gloom and black despair. Remember, sinner, you may set little value upon the means of grace now, but believe me that the period will arrive when you would give worlds, if you had them, for another day of gospel privileges to seek salvation in. O that you were wise, that you understood this, that you would consider your latter end! O, be prevailed upon to work while the day lasts, for of a truth, “The night cometh, when no man can work.”

4. When death comes, our probation closes, and our character, good or bad, is stamped for all eternity. Few thoughts can be more solemn, more awakening than this. We have lately entered upon an existence which shall never end. Our present life is

“—— The bud of being, the dim dawn,
The twilight of our day, the vestibule.
Life's theatre as yet is shut, and Death,
Strong Death, alone can heave the massy bar.”

And yet, upon the proper improvement of this first brief period of our existence depends all that shall come after! Yes, our character is now in a state of formation, and everything we think or do exerts its influence in giving it shape and complexion; and when death comes,

the process ceases, the character is stamped, and the state of the soul is fixed for ever. "As the tree falls so it must lie;" "As death leaves us judgment will overtake us;" for, according to the Scriptures, no sooner is the silver cord loosed and the golden bowl broken, than the decree of an immutable God rolls over the shrouded form: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Here is a Christian dying—his warfare is accomplished, his trials are ended—the time is, at least, arrived for him to lay down his armour, and, the battle won, to enjoy the repose of victory for ever. Over his head hangs the crown, and around him are the angels of God, who are ready, as ministering spirits, to conduct him to his home in the skies! But, is it a sinner breathing his last? O dreadful to think upon! His day of grace is ended; the angel of mercy has spread its wings; the door is shut, and the gloom of an eternal night is settling upon his poor lost soul—yea, demons of the pit hover around him, and already has he entered the vestibule of the prison-house of the damned! Ah me! to think of never having the star of hope lighted up any more, nor the day of grace renewed! Who can bear the thought? My brethren, this is our working time; O then, let one and all be

persuaded to work while the day lasts, knowing that "the night cometh when no man can work."

My brethren in the ministry—I see several around me*—our calling is a high calling; our work is emphatically a great work.

"'Tis not a cause of small import,
A preacher's care demands,
But what might fill an angel's heart,
And filled a Saviour's hands."

We are sent to arouse the thoughtless, to reclaim the vicious, to awaken those who are slumbering in their sins, and to bring wanderers home to Christ. In other words, we are sent forth to sound the tocsin of alarm, and to do what we can to save souls from going down to the pit! O, how much do we need the spirit of our Master—his spirit of love and self-denial, his spirit of devotion and quenchless zeal. Brethren, let us lay out our whole strength in our Master's service. We are engaged in a great work, a blessed work, a glorious work, and rich will be the reward of grace which shall be bestowed upon the faithful and successful minister of Christ; for thus it is written, "They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars,

* This sermon was preached at the close of a protracted meeting.

for ever and ever!" O what high rewards and immortal honours await those whose ruling passion on earth has been love to Christ and love to souls; who, amid a thousand hardships and trials incident to their office, have been enabled to say, with Paul, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Brethren, with some of us, "it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." O, how happy, if when we come to die, we may be able to say, with our Master, in our humble measure, "Father, I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do;" and, with Paul, exclaim, in the language of joy and triumph, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me in that day." Brethren in the ministry, we may never meet on earth any more. Permit this parting charge from one who has been in the ministry many years: Give yourselves up wholly to the blessed work of the ministry; your working time is an appointed time, therefore, work while the day lasts, "for the night cometh, when no man can work."

Ruling elders, you, too, are office-bearers in the Church of Christ. You, too, have an important work to do, and if you are active and zealous, you may do much to save souls, and build up the Church of Christ, where God has cast your lot. Let your language be,

“I love thy kingdom Lord,
The house of thine abode,
The church my bless'd Redeemer saved,
With his own precious blood.”

And, if at any time the ways of Zion mourn, and few come to her solemn feasts, say, with the pious captive Jew, by the river of Babylon, “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning: if I prefer thee not to my chief joy, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.” Ruling elders, respected and beloved in the Lord, your vows are recorded; and the eye of heaven is upon you; be active as servants of Christ and office-bearers in his Church; work while the day lasts, for “the night cometh, when no man can work.”

Beloved Sabbath-school teachers, you are engaged in a work which the angels of God themselves might delight in! Be not weary in well doing, for in due season you shall reap, if you faint not. May the children whom you instruct, rise up and call you blessed in the morning of the resurrection. Remember, the

time is coming, when you will not be seen in the Sabbath-school room any more! Work, therefore, while the day lasts, for "the night cometh, when no man can work."

Parents, God has given you children, and with each child this charge: Take this child, and bring it up for me, and I will give you your wages. These children are your jewels; take good care of them. They have immortal souls; see to it that you train them up in the way in which they should go—point them to heaven,

"Try each tender art, reprove each dull delay
Allure to brighter worlds and lead the way."

Whether you choose it or not, your precepts and example will exert a powerful influence in forming and stamping the character of your children. Remember the case of Eli, who neglected parental duty, and reason over the overwhelming sorrows which came upon him in consequence thereof. For your own sake, and the sake of your children, see to it, that you bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and above all things, be careful to set before them a good and pious example. Many parents will in heaven have their children as stars in their crown of rejoicing. May you be of that happy number. Soon the time for exerting parental influence will be over and

gone for ever. Only a little while, you and your children too will be sleeping under the clods of the valley. Therefore, work while the day lasts, for "The night cometh, when no man can work."

Professed disciples of Christ—you, too, have a work to perform. You have been brought unto the vineyard, some of you, perhaps, even at the eleventh hour. You are not to be loiterers—"Why stand ye here all the day idle?" Time is precious; and if your hearts are right in the sight of God, you may do much good in your day and generation. According to the Scriptures, you are to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works. You have around you many who are the enemies of the cross of Christ; over them you are to weep. You are to do what you can to reclaim the vicious, reform the intemperate, and bring wanderers home to Christ. Leave not this blessed work wholly to those who are office-bearers in the Church. It is the privilege of every member of the Church, nay, their bounden duty, "to come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." Even the humblest and the youngest are not excused. The Syrians, we are told, had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid, and she waited upon Naaman's wife; and she said unto her mistress, "Would God, my lord were with the prophet

that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy." Now this little captive maid made a suggestion that issued in curing Naaman, the Syrian chieftain, of his leprosy. Even so, there is not an individual present who may not be instrumental in doing good, much good. There are energies in the bosom of the Church, but alas! those energies are slumbering. O, if every member of the Church would but be as zealous and active as they should be—if every talent were laid out for the glory of God, how great would be the result! It would be seen in the enlargement of the Church and the correction of a thousand evils.

My dear Christian brethren, suffer a word of exhortation. According to the Scriptures, you are not your own; you have been bought with a price—and only think, with the precious blood of God's dear Son! Have you not, at the table of the Lord, recognized this great fact? Have you not frequently, and in circumstances of great solemnity, consecrated yourselves, your time, your talents, your property, your influence, all to the service of God? Is it not your duty to have a disposition every morning, and on all occasions, to say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Are you called upon to give—"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Are you called upon to engage in any service for the church, or to practise any self-denial, or to make any sacrifice, there

should be no holding back; but still let the inquiry be, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Some persons will give a certain amount, and say, I can give this sum, and not feel it. Are you sure it is not your duty to give something more, and feel it? Remember, the Saviour felt what he did for you. Some persons, when called upon to discharge some unpleasant duty, are too ready to say, "I pray thee, have me excused." Ah, me! if this had been the spirit of our blessed Redeemer, what would have become of our ruined race? O, if all who have named the name of Christ would only do what they might in the cause of virtue, of religion, and of God, surely their influence would be happily felt in every place and every department of life: "One might chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight." My dear Christian brethren, God might convert the world by the instrumentality of angels, or without any instrumentality at all; but he sees proper to roll this duty upon the Church. Let us, then, be awake to our duty; and O, let us be up and a-doing! Let us work while the day lasts, for "The night cometh, when no man can work."

But are there not some present who are impenitent sinners? And have they not also a work to perform, a great work—and lo! they have not yet even entered upon it. Sinner, this work must be done, or you cannot enter

the heavenly world. It must be done, and done whilst on earth, or you will be lost to all eternity! O, did you ever think what it is to be cut off from heaven? Did you ever think what it is to be lost to all eternity? O eternity, eternity! Think—no end, no end! When embosomed in eternity, you are done with earth for ever. You cannot come back to act your part over. Sinner, I tremble for you! You have a work to do—a great, great work. God has given you a day in which to perform this work, and much of this day is already gone. Perhaps your sun of life is already near its setting, and you have not yet even entered upon your work. What meanest thou, O sleeper? With what astonishment must angels gaze upon you, slumbering upon the very brink of everlasting ruin! Immortal man, take care of your soul! Only think, if the angel of death should now touch you, you are gone for ever! O, be persuaded to bestir yourself—this may be your last call! Your sun may be just going down! Therefore, “Work while the day lasts, for the night cometh, when no man can work.”

APPENDIX.

IN the year 1835, I received a letter from a Christian brother in the State of New York, requesting my sentiments on several subjects connected with protracted meetings, revivals, &c., to which I replied in substance as follows :

FRANKFORT, *Kentucky*, 26th May, 1835.

DEAR BROTHER—Your communication of the 28th ult. came to hand in due course of mail. The subject of *revivals* or *religious reformation*, is certainly one of great importance, and should be well understood, more especially as there are some in the bosom of the Church, excellent Christians too, who labour under prejudices which have a withering influence, both upon themselves and those around them. Having heard that I have acted as an Evangelist, and that I have been in many revivals, you wish me to state something of what I have seen and heard, together with the results of my experience and observation. Fifteen years of my life have been devoted to the duties of the pastoral office, and only about three to the work of an Evangelist, so called. It was chiefly whilst officiating in the latter capacity, that I had the pleasure of witnessing the varied and rich displays of the grace of God in the conversion of sinners; and although I am again a pastor, settled amongst an affectionate people, whom I tenderly love, and to whom, I humbly trust, my labours have not been in vain in the Lord, yet I must confess, that I look back to the period when I acted as an Evangelist, as the happiest in my life, because it was the period of most labour and most usefulness. My plan was, (having obtained the approbation of the proper ecclesiastical bodies,) to have a series of protracted meetings, spreading over a wide extent of country, and so arranging matters that I might have incessant employment. I laboured chiefly in South Carolina and Virginia, but attended numerous meetings also in Florida, Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and Ohio. It pleased God in the course of three years to make me an eye witness of many interesting scenes; and I have subsequently inquired with much

solicitude about results, and find that there are lights and shadows—matter for joy and sorrow; but, thank God, upon the whole, that which is cheering, far, very far, exceeds that which is of an opposite character. But you wish me to be more particular on certain points.

1. *Mental excitement.*—You ask whether it has usually been very strong? I answer, strong enough to produce deep anxiety; strong enough to extort the penitential cry; and, in many cases, strong enough to keep the eyes wakeful through the shades of night, and occasion tears, and sometimes sobbing in the prayer-meeting and house of God. Generally speaking, however, silence and solemnity reigned in our public and social meetings; and cases of disorder and extravagance have been very rare. In about eighty revivals of religion, averaging thirty converts each, I do not suppose there were more than eight or ten cases of outcries; and in nearly all of them order and stillness were immediately restored, by simply repeating this beautiful passage of Scripture, "The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him!"

2. *Measures.*—I must confess I have seen some things practiced which I could not approve. With regard to myself, I may have erred, but my rule has been to confine myself to no set of measures whatever; for my opinion has been and still is, that a measure which might be useful in one place, may be positively injurious in another. I have therefore varied them, according to times, and places, and circumstances. My general plan in conducting a protracted meeting has been this: After the first sermon, I come down from the pulpit, and address professors of religion, who are respectfully requested to occupy the seats immediately in front. This *measure*, if you choose to term it such, has usually had a remarkably happy effect. After the second or third sermon, come down from the pulpit again, and address the youth grouped in the same way. Sometimes, however, it has been found best to meet them in the lecture-room. At some suitable time and place, an appointment is made (if in town or city) for men of business. And when the religious excitement is manifestly spreading and deepening, I have found it of very great service to have a meeting exclusively for the unconverted; Christians being gathered together at the same time in another place, praying. This meeting has usually been extremely well attended, and has scarcely ever failed to be crowned with a remarkable blessing. In giving out the notice, however, I have found it very important to do it properly, so as to excite curiosity, but not awaken prejudice. I have been careful to give assurances that there was no intention to lay snares for them, but simply that they should be ad-

dressed in a respectful and affectionate manner. The lawyer wishes to see the jury whom he addresses. This is natural. The eye affects the heart. And why should not the minister have distinctly before him the characters whom he wishes particularly to address?

When certain individuals are known to be under serious impressions, an invitation is sometimes given, on peculiarly solemn occasions, for those who are serious, and who desire an interest in the prayers of God's people, to come forward, or kneel at their seats. This measure I once did not approve; but experience has taught me that it has a tendency to break down the pride of the heart, give decision of character, encourage ministers, and rouse the people of God to more earnest and effectual prayer. I am free, however, to confess, that in places where such an invitation is not expected, in my opinion it is no expedient. The invitation is sometimes given in the great congregation, but more generally in meetings of a more select and private character. Inquiry, or anxious meetings, have been much called for, and of great benefit. The plan suggested by a venerable and much esteemed father in our church, of inviting the serious to remain after sermon, may answer in some cases, but I confess I do not much like it, and for this simple reason:—when the congregation is dismissed, the current sets so strongly towards the door, that it is almost impossible to resist it. It is, I think, much better to have the anxious gathered together in a more private place, and with less observation. Before the protracted meeting is brought to a close, it is almost my invariable practice to have an appointment for children, from four to twelve years of age, parents also being particularly requested to attend. This meeting has proved, on almost every occasion, one of special interest. I have seen the attention of the dear little ones fixed, chained, for nearly an hour, their eyes sparkling with pleasure, and occasionally dimmed with tears; and I have noticed that many parents have been reached through their children, who would, it seems, be reached in no other way. Simplicity will please little children, and will touch parents too. I confidently expect to meet in glory many parents and children who will praise God for ever for meetings of this kind. In all my plans, my aim has been to keep divine truth in contact with the mind as long as possible without jading; for it is divine truth, sent home by the Spirit of God, that produces the effect desired, that accomplishes the change upon the sinner more glorious than the garnishing of the heavens: and I have observed, that by grouping classes, and diversifying addresses, the attention is oftentimes renewed, and the interest kept up to an extent that is really wonderful. Besides holding special meetings for the particular

classes mentioned, I have been in the habit of having a meeting for mothers, and I can truly say that such meetings have proved interesting and beneficial.

3. With regard to the "divisions which follow in the churches," I am happy to say I have seen or heard very little of this. My plan has been, from the commencement of the meeting, to inculcate the great importance of brotherly love, and to urge upon all the duty of possessing and manifesting a kind regard for each other's sentiments and feelings, and modes of worship. Harmony, I may say, has characterized all our meetings; and from what I have seen and known, I am persuaded that, in all ordinary circumstances, there need be no difficulty, for there is something beautiful and sweet in the Christian spirit; and this spirit is made peculiarly manifest in seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Only let ministers avoid all uncharitable and censorious remarks; let them be ever kind and conciliatory—let them aim, not at building up a particular church or party, but let them seek simply the glory of God in the conversion of sinners, and if they existed before, all jarrings will soon cease, and all prejudices soon vanish away. The Spirit of God working upon the unrenewed mind converts the lion into a lamb, the vulture into a dove; and shall not the same Spirit soften down those who have already been renewed?

With regard to *Evangelists*, I think in our church there is great occasion for them; but I would remark, it is matter of the last importance that they be prudent, and under the influence of a right spirit. Two things are indispensable:—First, that they go only where they are invited by the proper authorities of the church; and secondly, that in all things they consult the wishes, and submit to the will, of the pastor. I would further observe, that it is of the last importance that the evangelist should duly appreciate the sacredness and responsibility of the pastoral office, always speaking highly of the stated means of grace. And one main object, I think, which he should ever have in view, is to strengthen the reciprocal affection of pastor and people; and to this end it is extremely desirable that every evangelist should have himself been a pastor.

4. In relation to the *Press*, I would say, our religious papers render substantial aid to the cause of Zion. They are of immense service, containing oftentimes information of an extremely valuable character, and circulating intelligence which comes to us, "like cold water to the thirsty soul." But frequently the accounts which are given of protracted meetings and revivals, are too highly coloured, and sometimes there is a freedom of remark indulged in, which, to say the least, is not

good to the use of edifying. Alas, poor human nature! Everything is stamped with imperfection in this world.

Before I close this letter, permit me to say something on the subject of revivals in general, for there are many groundless prejudices. Some tell us, "they know not what a revival of religion means." When we speak of the revival of commerce, or the revival of learning, or the revival of a plant, the meaning is clearly understood. Why not, with equal ease, understand what is meant by the revival of religion? "But so many persons are converted at the same time! Is it not all sympathy?" The work is the work of God, and surely He that originally grouped the stars in the firmament of heaven, can with equal ease, group those who are to shine as stars for ever and ever. "But is there not a great deal of extravagance?" No, not if the ministers are prudent, and the meetings are properly conducted, and closed at proper hours. "Are there no individual cases of fanaticism? No excesses whatever?" Perhaps occasionally there may be. What then? The excesses of Carlstadt, and the fanaticism of the Anabaptists of Germany, did much to bring the Reformation into disrepute; but where is the American, where the lover of civil and religious liberty, who will not bless God for the glorious Reformation, notwithstanding the excesses of Carlstadt, and the fanaticism of the Anabaptists of Germany? "But can sinners be converted so suddenly?" In every case, perhaps without exception, they go the round to work out their own righteousness before they submit to Christ; but after all, is not regeneration instantaneous? Is not this doctrine recognized in all our standard works? Is it not the doctrine of the Bible? "But are there no spurious conversions?" There may be; and are we not taught to expect such things in the 13th chapter of Matthew? Spurious conversions! And are all pure gold who come into the church when there is no special excitement? Spurious conversions! A friend makes me a present of a bundle of bank bills in the hour of my necessity. On examining them, I find one or two counterfeit. Shall I send back the bundle and despise the gift? "But does not the excitement soon cease?" There is no necessity for it. I have heard of a revival which lasted two years, another which lasted six years, and I think the Bible tells me of one which is to last a thousand years! It is our privilege to have not merely a shower, but a whole day's set rain. Suppose, however, the positive excitement is not lasting, may not much good fruit nevertheless remain? A refreshing shower comes in time of drought, and vegetation takes a start. A few days after, the soil is dry again. Did the shower therefore do no good? "But do not some of the converts,

called, fall away?" Be it so. Go into your orchard; your trees are in full bloom. Some of those blossoms are going to fall away without fruit. What then? Would you have no blossoms at all; or would you have only two or three blossoms this year, and two or three the next? According to a calculation which I have made, only about one in fifteen or twenty of those hopefully converted, fall away. And what then? Here is a revival, and one hundred profess conversion, but only one half are really converted and saved from the damnation of hell, and brought home to God and to glory! Is that nothing? I think I have somewhere read that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. But you know how frivolous are the objections so frequently urged, so I need say no more.

Your brother in Christ,

DANIEL BAKER.

INTERESTING RECOLLECTIONS.

FACTS are beautiful things, and not unfrequently they furnish fine illustrations of sentiments and doctrines, known and believed by all who respect the sacred volume. In the Pastor's Journal, I have noticed a variety of cases related by those who were eye-witnesses of what they communicated; and I verily believe that the publication of them has proved to be exceedingly useful. Having myself during many revivals of religion, witnessed a number of very interesting things, I thought it proper to make a record of them, some of which are now laid before the public, as a suitable appendage to the foregoing sermons, and illustrative of certain passages of Scripture often quoted.

ASK AND YE SHALL RECEIVE.

1. In a certain town in Georgia, lived Mrs. M. a pious widow lady. She had two sons in a distant State, whom she had not seen for many years. They were thoughtless young men, and avowedly infidel in their sentiments. She received a letter from her sons promising an early visit. About this period an arrangement was made with myself, to hold a protracted meeting in the place of Mrs. M.'s residence, so soon as it would suit my convenience. The pious mother, exceedingly anxious for the conversion of her long absent and beloved sons, made it a matter of special prayer, that the Providence of God would so order matters that the visit of her sons, and the contemplated meeting, might take place at the same time. The young men came; remained several days, and then said they must return. They fixed on Friday night, when they must go without fail, in the stage. Poor mother! the meeting to which she looked forward with so much anxiety, had not commenced. The minister had not arrived. It seemed as if her prayers had availed nothing. On the morning of the day fixed for their departure she was told that the minister was come, and the first sermon would be preached that very night. How tantalizing! But mark the ingenuity of a pious mother! Having ascertained that the stage would not go that evening until 9 or 10 o'clock, she entreated her sons to go to church, and there remain until the sounding of the stage

horn should summon them away. I believe that most mothers would have said, I have not seen my sons for a long time; I may never see them any more. I believe I will not go to church myself, this evening. I will enjoy their company as long as I can. But no! Had she not offered special prayer that they might be present and receive a blessing at that meeting? "Come, my sons, go with me to church this evening, and hear what you can." They yielded. They went; and that night God answered the mother's prayers. Both were brought under powerful conviction. Near the closing of the services of the sanctuary, the sounding of the stage horn was heard, sure enough. According to arrangement they hurried away to the office—but, behold! the stage was full! They were obliged to remain until Monday following. On the Sabbath we had a most solemn time. When the anxious were invited to come forward, or kneel at their seat, if they desired the prayers of God's people, (according to the custom of that place,) several immediately knelt at their seats. Two young men came forward and kneeled near the desk—and only two. I saw an elderly lady at some distance, rise, and leaning forward, she fastened her tearful eyes upon them. It was the mother, and these young men were her sons! Many eyes were fixed upon her, but nobody said, Madam, sit down.—No! It was a sacred sight. Heaven bless the mother! Let her stand. Let her look on. O, it was worth an angel's visit from the skies! That day both of these young men obtained a joyful hope. Verily, it would have touched a heart of rock to have seen the sons, both of them throwing their arms around the neck of their beloved mother—now a thousand times dearer than ever—and telling her that the Lord had heard her prayers, and blessed them, as they hoped, with his forgiving love! Verily, the name of Jesus, in that moment uttered by them, came over her with all the sweetness and the power of a charm.

I saw the happy mother. She grasped my hand. She wept. The tears which rolled down her cheeks were tears of religious joy. For a few moments she was silent. When she spoke she blessed God, and said, in the very words of Mary, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour, for he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden." Verily, there is a God in the heavens who heareth prayer! One of those sons, I am told, is now a preacher. Take another case.

2. Whilst a meeting of much interest was going on in a certain country town in Virginia, Mr. K., a pious young man, selected a young lawyer who was a noted scorner, and made him the subject of special prayer. About two days afterwards the young lawyer came to the

house where the pastor was. I myself was in the same house at the time, but being particularly engaged, I requested the pastor to speak to him. "O," says he, "he is not serious." Yes, I replied, he must be, or he would not come here. "I know him better than you do," said the pastor, "he is a scorner. There is no hope of him." The young lawyer was permitted to depart, I believe, without a single religious remark having been made to him. My conjectures were true. He was then under awakening influences.

Perhaps two weeks after that, this young lawyer, now rejoicing in Christ, was riding along the road on his way to a protracted meeting, about to be held in an adjacent county. Before he reached the place, he fell in with another young man, Mr. P., going to the same meeting. Religious conversation was introduced, and the awakened lawyer spoke freely of the change of views and feelings which he had experienced, and ascribed them, under God, to the prayers of his friend, Mr. K., who had selected him as the subject of special prayer. "Ah!" said Mr. P., "I had friends once who used to pray for me; but I have been so careless, so wicked, they do not think it worth while to pray for me now. They have all given me up. There is not an individual I suppose on earth who remembers me in prayer." "O yes," replied the young lawyer, "there is one, I know." "Who is it?" quickly asked Mr. P. "The very same who prayed for me has made you the subject of special prayer." "Is it possible!" said Mr. P., and throwing himself back, he had well nigh fallen from the horse upon which he was riding. From that moment he waked up to the claims of his undying soul. A few days after, with great joy, he was telling to those around what a dear Saviour he had found. Blessed be God, the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Take another case.

3. During a protracted meeting held in S—, Alabama, two daughters of Zion met every day to pray together for their beloved husbands, who were highly respectable, but strangers to God's converting grace. One was a moralist, so called; the other an avowed infidel. Before the meeting closed, both of those were, I believe, soundly converted. The latter died some time after in great triumph; the former continues to this day, if I mistake not, a much valued member of the church of Christ with which he first united himself.

4. A meeting which led to some important and happy results, took place some years since in —, Georgia. Religion was at a low ebb in that place. There were sad jarrings amongst those who were taught by their Master to love one another. The first sermon was

preached on Saturday evening. On the Sabbath we had a pretty large congregation, and some considerable interest was manifested; but right melancholy was it on Monday, to see how few came to the sanctuary. Scarcely any but females. The men of the place, generally, seemed to take no interest in the meeting whatever; nay, some of them opposed, and even forbid their families attending. The meeting, however, went on, and of a truth the Lord was with us. By Wednesday morning something like ten females were hopefully converted, but not a single male, man or boy. Indeed, up to that hour we saw scarcely a single unconverted man (particularly during the day) in the church. We were not discouraged—we resolved to hold on. That morning, at the prayer-meeting which preceded preaching, those present, (and a precious band it was,) were reminded, of what indeed they knew full well, that the men were still uninterested. The case of Paul was stated, who went to the place where prayer was wont to be made, and spake to certain women that resorted there; and the glorious results were also brought to their recollection, and they were urged to offer up special and incessant prayer for the men. After preaching that morning there was much whispering. One said to another, as they were returning to their houses, "Did you see Captain H. at church this morning?" "Yes." "What brought him there?" "I don't know, but I certainly saw him." In the afternoon Captain H. was there again—and at night! The next morning also! "Why what is the matter? Captain H. comes three times a day! Well, this is strange!" But who is Captain H.? Why, a man of the world—a man of considerable influence; and supposed to be a skeptic. Moreover, a very firm and courageous man, who a few weeks before had arrested a man, when the sheriff, with all the force that he could get, could not arrest him. This is the man who, manifestly in answer to the prayers of the people of God, is brought to the sanctuary, and there led to consider his latter end. In the afternoon of Thursday he came again. Upon the close of the sermon, great seriousness being visible, the anxious were invited to kneel at their seats if they desired to be prayed for. Immediately Captain H. dropped upon his knees, and two others were at his side. The thing was soon noised abroad, and the men began to flock in wonderfully. "Captain H. is becoming religious." "You don't say so! Well, I will go and see." Soon divine influences began to rest upon the men in a remarkable manner, and in a short time we had the happiness of seeing, among others, as many as eight or ten men who had professed to have found the Saviour

precious to their souls. Captain H. has since become an active Christian, and a superintendent of the Sabbath School in that place.

"It shan't be said that praying breath
Was ever spent in vain."

WHEN THE LORD TURNED AGAIN OUR CAPTIVITY, WE WERE LIKE
THEM THAT DREAMED.

1. During the great revival in B—, Mr. F., a talented lawyer, was numbered amongst the converts. His case was a very clear and delightful one. He was one of several, who, brought in at that time, have devoted themselves to the gospel ministry. Already has Mr. F. entered the ministry—already has he been instrumental in winning many souls to Christ. Immediately after his conversion, I called upon him. He was upon the mount! With a countenance radiant with delight, he grasped my hand, and exclaimed, "O, sir, I have an ocean of joy!"

2. When Mr. P. (the young man mentioned in the previous article,) obtained a hope of an interest in a Saviour's blood, he seemed to be one of the happiest creatures on earth. Everything was new; everything delightful—the trees waving in the forest, the birds carolling in the groves, the sun shining in the heavens, and the dew drops sparkling with the beams of the morning,—all seemed to congratulate him upon his surprising and happy change. Standing, as it were, in a new world, he remarked, "I am a happy man! I have had more happiness in one half hour since my conversion, than I thought I should have even in heaven!"

3. At a meeting in Florida, Mr. A., who had been a disciple of Fanny Wright, and a very profane man, was happily brought to feel his need of a Saviour. After very pungent convictions, he obtained a joyful hope. But the transition from the gloom of infidelity to the brightness of gospel day, was so great that he was literally like one that dreamed. He could scarcely believe that such a sinner as he had been, could find mercy. It was almost too good to be true. Surely it must be a dream! But, no—it is a blessed reality! In this frame of mind, I recollect, he entered the inquiry meeting, one day, and every now and then, indulged in some exclamation of joy. As there were a number of interesting persons present, who were only a little serious, I was fearful lest they might be prejudiced by such things; and in apologizing for Mr. A., I made a remark of this kind, that it

was not at all surprising if a young convert should be almost wild with joy. Was not Archimedes wild with joy, when he had found out how to solve a certain problem? And, continued I, when a man of the world has drawn a prize in the lottery—twenty-five thousand dollars, for instance—Here the converted infidel interrupted me, “Don’t say twenty-five thousand dollars,” said he, starting from his seat, “don’t say twenty-five thousand dollars, sir,—say millions, sir, say millions!”

BEHOLD HOW GOOD AND HOW PLEASANT IT IS FOR BRETHREN TO
DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY.

1. During a protracted meeting held in G—, a pleasant summer retreat, in one of our southern States, an address was made to those who were professedly the people of God. Amongst other things, they were exhorted to cherish a spirit of brotherly love, and if they had had any quarrel with another, to forgive. They were affectionately urged to pass an act of forgiveness, without delay, and to seize the very first opportunity to extend the hand, and to do it cordially. In about twenty minutes after, while the services were yet going on, an elderly lady rose up, passed by me, and gave her hand to another lady. I certainly did not expect the exhortation to operate so soon, or at least in this way, but verily I was not displeased—no one was displeased. On the contrary, a wave of delicious feeling passed over the whole assembly. Many eyes were filled with tears, and methinks in that moment the God of love looked propitious down. Mark the sequel! That lady at that time had two sons and a daughter, all grown, and all yet unconverted. Before the protracted meeting closed, she had the unspeakable satisfaction of seeing all three rejoicing in the hope of glory! What is this but the broad seal of heaven’s approbation? “Beloved,” says John, “let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.”

2. I recollect another case which occurred in Virginia. Whilst addressing professors of religion, I, as my custom was, urged the great duty of forgiveness, and in order to give greater effect to my exhortations, I stated the case already mentioned, as one pleasing to God and worthy of all commendation, and then made a remark of this kind: “If there are any present in similar circumstances, let them go and do likewise.” Whilst I was yet speaking, an elder of the church reached out his hand over the benches to one who sat at some distance,

and with much feeling said, "Neighbour, here is my hand." Another elder also arose, a man of silvery locks, and hurrying to another part of the house, gave his hand to an individual, who grasped it, and said aloud, "This is the very thing I have long wished for." Need I say that a revival followed! Of a truth we had blessed times. How beautiful are the words of the apostle, "And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

3. In —, State of —, lived a minister of the gospel, a man of some considerable wealth and talents, but in a wretchedly backslidden state. He had instituted three law suits, two of them against Mr. P., an amiable man, and a warm-hearted Christian. Eminent lawyers were employed, and the suits were of such a nature as, if brought into court, would have thrown the whole community into a ferment. Whilst matters were in this condition, a revival commenced in the neighbourhood. Both were much interested. The minister began to feel that he had indulged too much of a contentious spirit. Receiving, moreover, a letter at this time from a connexion of his, recently converted, he wept, was completely softened down, and forthwith gave directions to his lawyers to drop the suits. The very next morning, if I mistake not, he went to a prayer meeting, where he met Mr. P., offered him his hand, and told him that he should prosecute his suits no further. Mr. P., much affected, threw himself upon his shoulders, and wept aloud. O, it was a scene of thrilling interest. Methinks hovering angels looked in each other's faces, smiled, and began to chant David's beautiful psalm:

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

4. I recollect yet another case. During the progress of a delightful meeting in a country church in East Tennessee, having occasion to speak on the subject of forgiving injuries, I stated one or two of the preceding cases, and then, in substance spoke as follows: "I know nothing of the state of things in this church, for I am here only as a stranger, in a strange land. I know not whether there has been any difficulty or variance between any now present. Neither your beloved pastor nor any other person has said a word to me on the subject, but drawing a bow at a venture, I will repeat a remark which I am in the

habit of making in many places:—"Is there a person in the world with whom you would not shake hands? If so, I solemnly charge you now, in the presence of God and his elect angels, and before Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing in his kingdom—I solemnly charge you, pass an act of forgiveness this moment, and seize the earliest opportunity to extend the hand in token of forgiveness. 'Beloved,' continued I, 'let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God; he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.' " Saying these things, in a few moments I pronounced the benediction, and as the congregation were beginning to disperse, two gentlemen,* who had, it seems, been literally at swords' points, looked at each other, and rushed into each other's embrace, weeping abundantly. O, it was a lovely and touching sight; it was the triumph of grace over corrupt human nature. Surely religion comes to bless, and not to curse; it comes to change hearts, to convert the lion into a lamb, the vulture into a dove.

WHERE SIN ABOUNDED, GRACE DID MUCH MORE ABOUND.

1. Some time ago, a meeting of several days' continuance was held in G—, a pleasant summer retreat in South Carolina. Awakening influences went abroad upon the people almost from its very commencement. To increase the solemnity, the Providence of God concurred with the preaching of the word. Death upon the pale horse came and took away a victim. A young lawyer was cut down in the midst of his years! All classes of persons now seemed to be aroused to a concern for their undying souls. There was one young man, however, the only son of his mother, and she a widow, who took his stand openly on the side of opposition. He was an avowed infidel. He threatened to lay the hand of violence upon the ministers, and once made this remark: "When I die I will go to hell, and make a row there, and drive the Almighty from his throne!" How impious! How daring! That evening he went to church, and as usual, endeavoured to make sport of what was said from the pulpit. It pleased God, however, to send a word like an arrow to his heart. His sins flashed upon his view. He literally trembled upon his seat, and after the benediction was pronounced, he came up to me, grasped my hand, and with great anxiety asked what he must do to be saved? It was but another case of the Philippian jailor, and I could do no better than reply in the words of

* One some time before had actually attempted to take the life of the other.

the apostle, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Two days after this, I saw him, all joy and peace in believing. O, it would have done any one good to have seen his dear mother throwing her arms around him, and saying, in the joy of her heart, "This my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found!" Subsequently this young man went to the north, to prepare to preach "the glorious gospel of the blessed God."

2. A few weeks after the meeting just mentioned, one of a similar kind was held at —, about fifty miles distant. The first sermon was preached on Tuesday night, and by Thursday afternoon the waters were troubled, and a goodly number had stepped into the pool. There was one man, however, who had no idea of such "*carryings on*." He was a very irreligious man, and although he heard perhaps every sermon, he liked none of them, but generally returned from church in a rage. On Thursday evening I was invited to take tea at the house where he lodged. When he heard it he was angry. When he saw me coming, he, as I have been told, swore terribly. On entering the house I was introduced by a friend, who immediately retired. Left alone with this man, I confess I felt very awkwardly fixed, and scarcely knowing what to say, I made a remark of this kind: "Well, sir, I think we have had a very interesting meeting this afternoon." Immediately he burst into tears, crying aloud, "Mercy! mercy! Lord have mercy upon me!" "Shall I pray for you, my dear sir?" said I, "Most willingly, most willingly," replied he. When I finished praying, he seemed so bowed down he could scarcely rise from his knees. That night there was no rest for him. The next day he was found amongst the anxious—a few days after, amongst the people of God! and is now, it seems, a valuable member of the church. God be praised!

3. The case of Dr. B., brought in at the eleventh hour, is yet more remarkable. Licensed by the Presbytery of —, in the year 1793, he preached a few sermons, (he entered the ministry purely, it seems, to please his parents,) then abandoned the ministry and became a deist. In the year 1797, he declared himself an atheist. From that period, and for many a long year afterwards, even until his locks became hoary with age, he waged open war with the God of the Bible. I had heard much of Dr. B. as a man of influence, and one who had done immense mischief. I confess my curiosity was excited to see the man. At a protracted meeting held at M—, Dr. B. was present. He was awakened—was brought under deep and pungent conviction. I conversed with him. He was in an awful state of mind; for, though evidently under divine influences, he had a great many objections to the Bible—quar-

relled with Moses—did not like his account of the creation of the world. “Dr. B.,” said I, at last, “if you will indulge such a disposition to cavil, there is no need to say anything more to you, sir.” I immediately changed the conversation. The next morning at prayer-meeting, the Dr. requested permission to make a remark. Permission was granted. He arose, with much emotion, and said, “My friends, I have been a most flagitious sinner.” He went on in this strain for about ten minutes, and then sat down in great distress of mind. It was a most affecting sight. That day, I think it was, he was brought to the very borders of despair. “There is no hope,” said he; “Saul of Tarsus cannot be compared with me—I must be damned!” “O no,” said I, “the blessed Jesus is both able and willing to save you.” “No, sir,” replied he, with great emotion, “there is no possibility of my salvation—I must be damned.” About 10 o’clock he was conducted into his chamber. I slept in the same room; but there was no sleep for Dr. B. He felt that he was a lost sinner. Tossing himself about in the bed, he sighed, and groaned, and wept. All was dark and cheerless to his soul until about one o’clock, when he spoke aloud, and calling me by name, said, “Mr. B., are you awake?” When informed—“O, sir,” exclaimed he, “I feel a change! I can accept of the Saviour now! If Jesus Christ does not save me, I am damned for ever! I am happy! I am happy! I would not part with my present feelings for ten thousand worlds.” “Well,” said I, “Dr. B., I suppose you can say, ‘O to grace, how great a debtor.’” Clapping his hands together, he exclaimed with great emphasis, “The very thing, sir, the very thing!” As he said this, he arose and began to dress himself. No sun had yet lighted up the eastern horizon, but what was better still, the Star of Hope had risen upon his soul!

“Brightest star that ever rose,
Sweetest star that ever shone.”

The next day, in the presence of the great congregation, he presented himself as a miracle of grace, and told what the Lord had done for his soul. I suspect, that moment angels in heaven struck a note loud and long, rich and sweet. Some ten years after this, I mentioned this case to a certain lady in conversation.—“O Sir,” said she, “Dr. B. is my brother-in-law.” “Indeed! said I. Well, is he still alive?” “Yes,” said she, “he is still alive.” “And, Madam,” continued I, how does he hold on?” “O, very well,” said she, “very well; he is a member of the church, and a useful member too.” Surely grace is triumphant, and reigns like a conqueror.

MATERNAL INFLUENCE.

Some few years since, when in Texas, I unexpectedly lighted upon a military post. The soldiers, so far as their spiritual interests were concerned, had been sadly neglected. No one had preached to them, nor had any one, it seems, given them a single Bible or tract—no man cared for their souls. Having obtained permission of the commander, I preached several times to them. On one occasion, in the midst of my discourse, I observed—"Soldiers! most of you, I suppose, are from the United States, and are perhaps entirely regardless of the interests of your souls; but I wonder if some of you have not pious mothers at home, who have loved you, and prayed for you, aye, and have wept on your account." Having made these, or very similar remarks, I cast my eyes rapidly over the faces of those before me, and observed one who was exceedingly wrought upon. Every muscle of his face seemed to be moved, and the tears began to trickle down his cheeks. Then addressing him particularly—"Soldier!" said I, "come here—I want to talk with you." Sure enough, he immediately followed me, and when we had gone a little way off—"Soldier!" said I, "tell me—have not you a pious mother?" Bursting into a flood of tears—"Yes, sir," said he, "I have a very pious mother, a member of the Methodist Church in Pennsylvania." Here he wept aloud—so loud that he might have been heard a very considerable distance. After pointing out the way of salvation to him, through a crucified Saviour, as clearly as I could, I left him. Some two or three days after I called again, and found him rejoicing in the hope of glory. He had found his mother's Saviour and his mother's God! Heaven bless mothers, *pious* mothers, all the world over! and let all the angels of God say Amen. Thank God, I too had a pious mother.

THE END.

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